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JULY, 1947

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Shortly after it first began to appear in printed format in December 1943, readers in music libraries in the United States began to discover that it gave them the most comprehensive account of the musical materials appearing in the United States—books on music, gramophone records, music itself—of any American magazine. In addition, the reviews were authoritative, provocative, lively. They made genuinely good reading.

The reason for this is not hard to find. Some of the most famous writers and musicians in the country were doing the reviewing. The tone was set by musicologists like Alfred Einstein and Otto Kinkeldey, authors of good, popular books like Gilbert Chase and John Tasker Howard, heads of university music departments like Professors Earl Moore and Glen Haydon, conductors of large symphony orchestras like Erich Leinsdorf and Hans Kindler, folklorists like Benjamin Botkin and Duncan Emrich, composers like Henry Cowell, Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson, Nicholas Nabokoff—specialists in many fields writing on their specialities.

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THE MUSIC REVIEW

Edited by GEOFFREY SHARP

VOL. VIII, NO. 3

AUGUST, 1947

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The History of Wolf's "Italian Serenade"

BY

FRANK WALKER

I

THE END OF A CONTROVERSY

IN February, 1941, an article by A. Aber appeared in the *Musical Times*, which gave rise to a lengthy controversy about the chronology of, and relationship between, the different versions of Hugo Wolf's *Italian Serenade*. Dr. Aber, who set out, in his own words, "to clear up some errors with regard to the work that appear to be current in England", was taken to task by Mr. Ernest Newman, who devoted to the problems of the *Serenade* no less than four of his weekly articles in the *Sunday Times*. Dr. Aber replied, restating his case with unshaken assurance.

As a student of Wolf's life and work for many years, I then ventured to join the fray, and endeavoured to clarify the history of the *Serenade* in an article in the *Musical Times* for May, 1941. The evidence of Wolf's letters seemed to me to suggest that Ernst Decsey, in the standard German work on the composer, and other writers, had misunderstood and unnecessarily confused the whole matter. My theories were scornfully rejected by the imperturbable Dr. Aber.

The last echoes of the *Italian Serenade* controversy died away in the correspondence columns of THE MUSIC REVIEW for May, 1942, after Dr. Aber, in an article on Wolf's posthumous works, had given me occasion to point out a few more of his inconsistencies. It was evident that the many problems which the *Serenade* presents could not be solved without recourse to the manuscripts, which were, of course, beyond everybody's reach at that time. These manuscripts I have now thoroughly examined¹ and this is my excuse for returning to a subject of which, perhaps, most readers of English periodical literature have already heard enough. This time, however, I bring not theories, but *facts*, to which I should like to draw the attention of Dr. Aber, and of anyone else who desires to settle in his mind, once and for all, the teasing problems raised by Wolf's delightful little masterpiece.

¹ I am greatly indebted to Dr. Jancik, of the Music Section of the National Library, Vienna, who in times of great difficulties and hardship took enormous trouble to give me access to these manuscripts, and I have also to thank Dr. Racek, of the Vienna City Library, for much kindness and hospitality in the bleak, fuel-less Viennese winter of 1945-46.

The chief of these problems are:—

- (a) Does there exist, as appears from the writings of Decsey² and Hellmer, an earlier *Italian Serenade*, composed in 1887, which is merely "thematically related" to the published works?
- (b) What are the relative dates of composition or arrangement of the two published versions?
- (c) To what extent was Max Reger responsible for the scoring of the (posthumously published) orchestral version?

Enough, or too much, has already been conjectured on the incomplete evidence of the Wolf literature and letters. We will turn to the evidence of the manuscripts.

The National Library in Vienna has been in possession of Wolf's fair copy of the score of the string quartet version of the *Serenade* since 1928. This manuscript, which we will call C, is *identical* with the published score for string quartet, but bears no date, and thus leaves us, for the purpose of the present inquiry, precisely where we were, except that we now know, with absolute certainty, that every note of the published version for string quartet is Wolf's own.

In March, 1940, the Library acquired from the Köchert family a mass of early drafts and sketches not previously known to Wolf research, and of the first importance for the study of the composer's creative processes and of the history of works like the String Quartet in D minor and the *Serenade*, about which confusion reigns. Among these papers are two groups of manuscript sheets which especially concern us here.

The Library's No. 19521³ covers a group of six sheets, numbered also in the corners K16-21, of pencil sketches on two staves, which, however, include the first drafts of two distinct compositions. These sketches we will call Manuscript A:

The Library's Nos. 19524-5 consist of another group of four pages of music, with the distribution of the material of the above pencil sketches between the instruments of the string quartet. This let us name Manuscript B, and then look at our A, B and C in turn. This will make rather dull reading, but perhaps enable us to form a clear idea of how the *Serenade* came into being.

² Decsey, Vol. II, p. 5, writing of the compositions of 1887, says: "Two movements for string quartet also belong to this year: a *Humoristisches Intermezzo* and an *Italienische Serenade*, which is thematically related to the later *Italienische Serenade* for small orchestra, composed at the beginning of the 'nineties."

Then in Vol. III, p. 157, he writes: "Wolf has left the movement in two versions. Once for small orchestra . . . then in an arrangement (*Bearbeitung*) for string quartet, in which the ideas are happily divided between the four instruments."

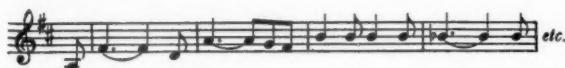
Thus, according to Decsey, we have three versions of the *Serenade*:—

- (1) A work of 1887, for string quartet, only thematically related to the later ones;
- (2) The version for small orchestra, composed at the beginning of the nineties;
- (3) Wolf's arrangement of this for string quartet.*

* The manuscripts have not yet been thoroughly sorted and catalogued for the Library and these numbers may not be definitive. There are several portfolios bulging with papers and one sometimes has to seek in different portfolios for the fragments of a single work.

Sheets K16 and 17 of Manuscript A contain material for the *Intermezzo* for string quartet which will be discussed later. The *Serenade* sketches, dated 2nd May, 1887 (see Plate 1), begin on K19, side a, after a few bars scored through. K19a takes the work as far as p. 5, the end of l. 2, of the published miniature score (Eulenburg edition), plus one bar, corresponding to the first bar of l. 3 but without its delightful skipping motion. The "Continuation" (*Fortsetzung*) is found on K18, side a, which goes back to p. 5, l. 2, bar 5 and continues, with the skipping motion of the final version, to the end of p. 6 of the published score.

The sketches show that Wolf tried three times before he found the definitive material for the next episode of this little work. The succeeding 18 bars on K18a, rejected in the final version, include a theme:



The unused passage is enclosed in brackets. There follows another projected continuation, 16 bars, with the theme:



This second rejected passage (continued overleaf, K18b) ends also in a bracket. Wolf then found, at the third attempt, the right continuation from this point of the composition (top of p. 7 of the published score) and K18b takes the work as far as p. 8, l. 3, bar 2. Then on the reverse of the first sheet (K19b) we find another "Continuation" to p. 10, l. 3, bar 1 (the return of the principal theme) and here Wolf writes simply: "As at the beginning", without re-copying the music.

Another sheet of manuscript, K20a, takes up the composition again at the point p. 12, l. 2, last bar of the printed score and continues, with erasures, as far as p. 13, end of l. 3. The next "Continuation", on the same side of this sheet K20, goes back a few bars to just before the second "Recit" passage on p. 13 of the score, but after a few bars goes otherwise. All this passage was then crossed out by Wolf. The connecting link between p. 13, end of l. 3, and p. 14, beginning of l. 2 is missing in these sketches. K20b begins with the note: "Four introductory bars" and then carries the composition from p. 14, l. 2, bar 8 to p. 15, l. 3, bar 1. This is all written out in 6/8 time, instead of 3/8 as in the final version, so that one bar of the manuscript corresponds to two bars of the printed score. Thus the "Four introductory bars" of the sketches become eight bars of the score, and so forth. The following passage of 12½ bars (equivalent to 25 bars in 3/8 time) is all erased. It begins as in the score but goes its own way. Another connecting passage is missing here.

The manuscript continues from p. 16, l. 3, bar 5 to p. 18, l. 1, bar 2. K21a takes the work to p. 20, l. 3, bar 6 and K21b continues to p. 20, l. 4, bar 1. Then we have "As at the beginning, etc." again, where the principal theme returns. All this is very sketchy, as though Wolf already had his composition

clearly in his head and only set down the essential outline. The sketches continue at the point p. 21, l. 3, bar 4, and take the work as far as p. 22, l. 3, bar 1. Wolf then scribbles, "As at the very beginning, and finish".

The whole work, with the exception of two short connecting passages, is thus already contained, or unmistakably implied, in this Manuscript A, begun on 2nd May, 1887.

Manuscript B, to which we next turn our attention, contains the complete *Serenade* for string quartet in its definitive form, as far as the notes are concerned, with only one quite unimportant divergency, in the second violin part, from the published version for string quartet. This divergency takes place at the passage corresponding to p. 10, l. 4, bar 5-p. 11, l. 1, bar 3, of the published score (seven bars in all).

In Manuscript B, Wolf has in the second violin part⁴



instead of the final



Most of the dynamic markings remain to be added later. Here and there the lower parts are not fully written out, but Wolf's remark in such cases, "Analog wie vorher", allows of no misunderstanding. The whole work is here complete in all its details, except the one small variant above, *in the form in which we know it*.

The first page of this Manuscript B is reproduced (Plate 2) to show Wolf's date at the head of the score: "Vienna, May 4th, 1887".

So the *Serenade* was begun on 2nd May, 1887 (Manuscript A) and by 4th May was already completed, since on that day Wolf began to lay out the work in score for string quartet (Manuscript B). When he completed this task is not certain, although from the look of the manuscript, which is complete on four sheets like that reproduced in Plate 2, it is quite likely that he finished scoring it for string quartet on the same day as he began it. In any case the whole work already existed, in his head and on paper, before he began this more or less mechanical task of distributing the music between the instruments of the quartet. Manuscript C (undated) is his fair copy, in which he made the trifling alteration to a few bars of the second violin part and added phrasing and dynamic markings.

We are now in a position to answer the first two of the three main questions raised by the *Serenade*.

- (a) Decsey, Hellmer and all the others who followed them were quite wrong when they described the *Italian Serenade* of 1887 as merely

⁴ The quotation begins a bar before and ends a bar after the variant passage.

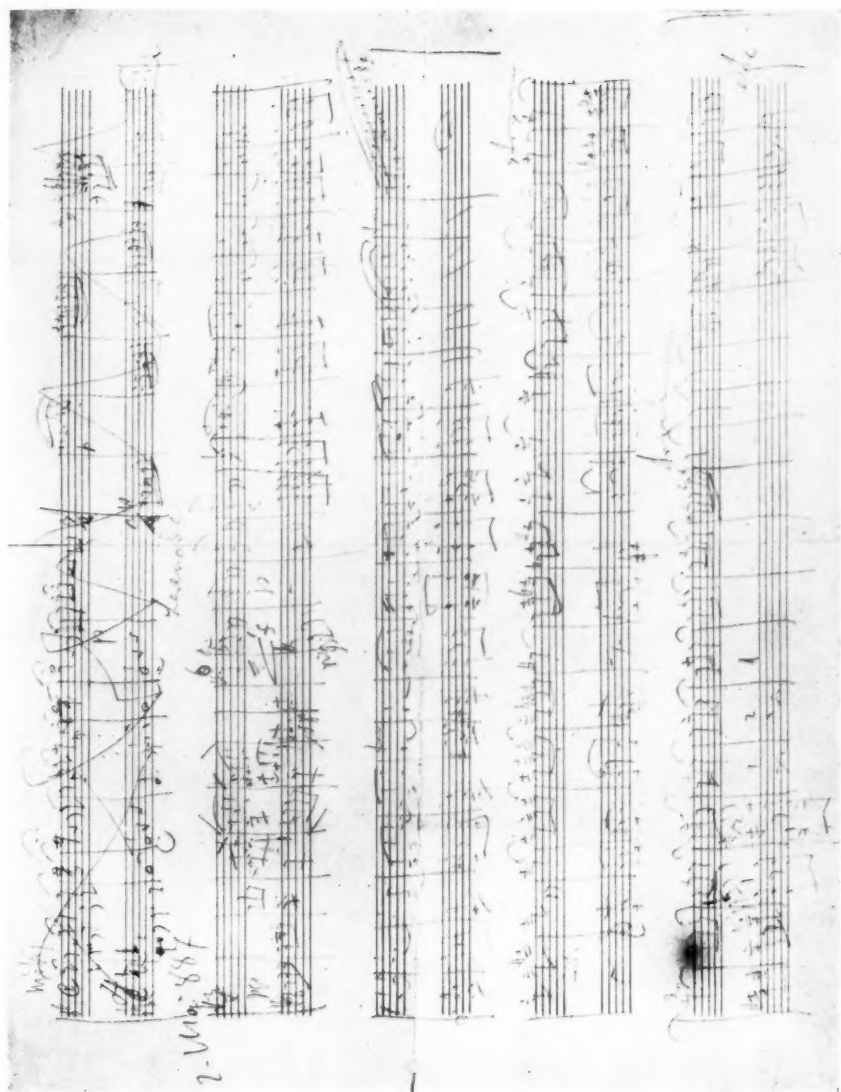


PLATE 1. The first pencil sketches for the *Serenade*.

7. *Viol. I*
Viol. II
Viola
Cello
Double Bass

Handwritten notes and musical notation on staves, including the title "Serenade" and the date "May 1891".

PLATE 2. The Serenade drafted for string quartet.

Amoroso *Allegro*

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
Double Bass
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
Double Bass

N° 8.

PLATE 3. Wolf's orchestral version of the *Serenade*.

3546.

In Lemongro

Mäßig.

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PLATE 4. The unpublished *Intermezzo* for string quartet (fair copy).

"thematically related" to the later work. *The Serenade of 1887 is the published work for string quartet.*

- (b) The precise date of composition of the published string quartet version may be confidently set down in future as 2nd-4th May, 1887.

The orchestral version, as the letters show, occupied Wolf in Döbling in April and May, 1892. It is likely, though not demonstrable, that he also completed it in that year. In any case the orchestral version is an arrangement of the string quartet version, and not vice-versa.⁵

Now let us turn to our third problem—Reger's work as editor of the orchestral version.

The extent of Reger's share in the work is clearly indicated by Decsey, who is not here at fault. Reger himself told Decsey that he had "looked through the proofs of the orchestral score" and Decsey mentions this "as the idea seems to have got about that Reger scored the *Serenade*". But Reger's name on the published score has led innumerable writers into error. Often the work appears on concert programmes and gramophone record labels with the attribution "Wolf-Reger" or "Wolf, arranged Reger" and the natural assumption, by those who have not studied the subject, is that Reger had an important share in this form of the work. Other writers—a recent instance is Richard Litterscheid (*Hugo Wolf*, Potsdam, 1939)—have come to the conclusion that Reger must have transcribed the solo part, which, as Decsey tells us, was originally written for cor anglais, for solo viola. Dr. Aber got as far as suggesting that Reger told Decsey deliberate untruths about his own share in the work, out of respect for Wolf. "It may well be that in his boundless admiration for the composer, Reger felt that it would be intrusive to attach his name to the score" (*Musical Times*, February, 1941).

Wolf's manuscript of the orchestral version of the *Serenade*, in the National Library, Vienna, allows us to dispose of all these mistaken ideas. Collation of the published score with the manuscript shows that Reger did his work as editor conscientiously and well, but that the scoring is wholly—or 99·9 recurring per cent.—*Wolf's*.

There is no *musical* justification for the common attribution of the work to "Wolf, arranged Reger", although Dr. Aber, who should know the facts in a matter of this kind, tells us (*Musical Times*, April, 1941) that the version for small orchestra remains legally protected as *an arrangement by Max Reger* until

⁵ Here I may, since so much ridicule has been cast upon my theories by Dr. Aber, perhaps be permitted to quote from my original article, "Hugo Wolf's 'Italian Serenade'. The Facts and a New Theory", in the *Musical Times*:

"It is the contention of the present writer that not only was the orchestral version, as published, arranged by Wolf from the string quartet version, as published, and not vice-versa, but that this string quartet version is none other than the original 'Italian Serenade' of 1887—a composition of the pre-Mörke period."

Regarding Edmund von Hellmer's contribution to the legend of the mysterious "thematically related" work of 1887—and it was Hellmer who first used the phrase and probably misled Decsey in doing so—I may remark that I have discussed the whole matter with Herr von Hellmer, who has given me much assistance in my Wolf studies, and no one is more ready than he to admit that the phrase was loosely and inaccurately applied.

fifty years after Reger's death. If so, it provides us with yet another instance of the tricks of the musical trade, as practised by publishers, and the sooner a new edition, *without* Reger's name, and without his editorial alterations, is brought out, the better. There should be no difficulty in finding someone to make any adjustments necessary for practical purposes without claiming copyright in the work.

The manuscript shows that Wolf first gave the principal theme and a prominent part throughout the first section of the work to the cor anglais. After the first double bar (published orchestral score p. 8, bar 8 to p. 13, bar 4) he employed the cor anglais as an ordinary orchestral instrument, without any specially prominent part. The *second* presentation of the main theme (p. 13, bar 4 to p. 15, bar 15), with flute counterpoint, he gave to a *solo viola*, the cor anglais playing with the viola for only a few bars (p. 15, bars 6-11) towards the end. From p. 15, bar 15 the solo viola was discontinued and the cor anglais continued to be used as an orchestral instrument without particular distinction. At p. 27, bar 8, the oboe began to present the main theme for the third time, but the cor anglais after a few bars took it over again in a solo capacity.

So, in the original scoring, the *first* presentation of the main theme was given to the cor anglais, the *second* to a solo viola, the *third* to the cor anglais again.

Later Wolf decided to dispense with the cor anglais and allow the solo viola to present the main theme on all its appearances. In order to save himself the trouble of re-copying the score he scribbled a note on the first page: "Solo viola to play instead of cor anglais throughout" (see Plate 3).⁶

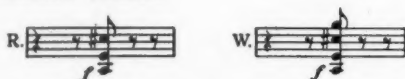
All Reger had to do was to re-copy the score in accordance with this note of Wolf's and make a very few minute editorial amendments. There follows a complete list of every variation, in addition to the transfer of the solo part from cor anglais to viola, between the manuscript and the score as edited by Reger.

1. p. 4, bar 17—*pp* added to bassoon and horn parts where no indication by Wolf.

2. p. 6, bars 14-15—Second violins.



3. p. 9, bar 13—Second violins.

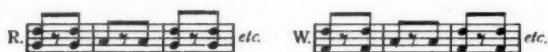


4. p. 10, last bar—p. 11, first bar—Bassoons.



⁶ Wolf's list of instruments on his first page has "flute" and "oboe", both in the singular, but his scoring calls for two of each of these instruments, as in Reger's published version.

5. p. 12, bar 4—Clarinets added to the chord on the first beat of the bar. Wolf has a rest.
6. p. 15, bar 6—The first flute part is marked *p* by Reger, *pp* by Wolf.
7. p. 15, bars 5-11—Violas, beginning



Reger has E & A throughout where Wolf has E & G.

8. p. 21, bar 14—Two grace-notes added in flute part to correspond with the identical passage in violins.
9. p. 23, bars 7-8—Clarinets.



10. p. 23, bars 17-19—Clarinets.



11. p. 24, bar 17—The *molto crescendo* begins with Wolf one bar later.
12. p. 25, bars 17-24—The phrase Wolf gives to the second flute is divided by Reger between 2 flutes.
13. p. 26, bars 1-17—1st violins. Wolf writes this tremolo (mit Dämpfer) passage an octave higher.
14. p. 27, bar 21—1st violins (bars 21-24 affected), "ohne Dämpfer" added by Reger. Wolf marks the 1st violins "ohne Dämpfer" at p. 28, bar 10, on their next entry.
15. p. 28, bars 13-14—1st violins. The E on the last beat of bar 13 is tied to the E on the first beat of bar 14 by Reger, not by Wolf.
16. p. 28, bar 15—2nd violins.



That is all. Everyone may decide for himself how far Reger was justified in what he did—in which particulars he made necessary corrections of slips by Wolf and where his hand was not really required. The above differences *exist*, however, between the manuscript and the published score, and to discover the extent of such differences was the object of this inquiry.

It will be agreed, I think, that in relation to the whole, Reger's retouches are *microscopic*. The scoring is, practically, 100 per cent. Wolf's. The expression marks and the phrasing are all his.

There we have the answer to our third question.

II

THE "INTERMEZZO" FOR STRING QUARTET

Many lovers of Wolf's *Serenade* must have had their curiosity aroused by references to the *Intermezzo*, or, as Wolf refers to it in a letter to Grohe, the *Humoristisches Intermezzo*, for string quartet. The work is unpublished and practically unknown, although after Wolf's death it was performed once, on 28th February, 1907, by the Prill Quartet, at a concert organized by the Vienna *Wagner Verein*.⁷ There is no description of it in any book on Wolf. It was announced for publication, before the war, by *Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag*, Vienna and Leipzig, in the series of Wolf's Posthumous Works, but has not yet appeared.

The manuscripts—the pencil sketches, the first draft for string quartet and the fair copy—are also in the National Library in Vienna. Plate 4 reproduces the first page of the fair copy, the companion to the fair copy of the *Serenade* (Manuscript C, in our *Serenade* inquiry).

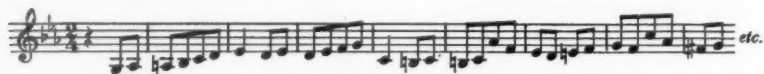
The manuscripts show that this work was not composed so rapidly as the *Serenade* and that it came into existence in 1886 and not, as Wolf's own statement to Grohe led Decsey and the rest of us to believe, in 1887.

An isolated scrap of paper with this theme in pencil



bears the early date of 3rd June, 1882. In April, 1886, when, as the manuscripts show, Wolf began his *Intermezzo* for string quartet, he used this old idea as the germ of his principal theme. The work was finished in Murau on 1st October, 1886.

It is an arresting little composition. It lacks the spontaneity of the *Serenade*, perhaps, but is most cleverly contrived and full of life and vigour. It is practically monothematic. Out of the material of the principal subject the whole composition grows. The main theme itself recurs in its entirety,



in the main key, thrice, each time in a different setting—first as a dialogue between the violins, then in a similar colloquy between viola and 2nd violin, and later on the viola alone. Between these statements of the principal theme are highly elaborate developments of its elements, contrasted with each other or combined together with infinite resource. The second of these development sections starts up a 6/8 movement, wherein all the material is still clearly derived from the original theme, however widely it may range from its starting point, and into this 6/8 pattern phrases from the main theme in 2/4 gradually

⁷ From a programme among documents concerning the *Hugo Wolf Verein*, in the archives of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*, Vienna.

reassert themselves in a passage of considerable rhythmic complexity. When the viola brings the third presentation of the principal subject, the 6/8 rhythm still lingers in the two upper instruments. A brief *coda* rounds off the work with a final reminiscence of the opening idea. The development process which forms so large a part of the *Intermezzo* is perhaps overdone, making a rather laboured effect at times, but the work as a whole is extremely interesting and lively, and deserves to be much better known than it is at present.

III

UNPUBLISHED FRAGMENTS OF THE "ITALIAN SERENADE"

Among the sketches in the National Library and among the manuscripts which the Vienna City Library took over in 1939 from the *Wagner Verein* are various fragments which are of interest in the history of the *Serenade*. They provide evidence of the difficulty Wolf encountered in attempting to carry out his plan for a larger work in several movements, and show how persistent he was in seeking a solution of his problems. None of these manuscripts mentions the *Serenade* by name, but the headings "second movement" and "third movement" and the evidence of Wolf's letters lead to the conclusion that they all concern this work. The following list includes, also, some details of an unfinished movement, the manuscript of which has disappeared:

- (a) In the City Library.⁸ An undated sheet of music paper, the first four staves coupled for string quartet. There is no music, but only the heading "Second movement", *Langsam*, with one flat and 3/4 time signature.
- (b) In the City Library.⁸ As above, but with the heading "Third movement" and nothing else at all.
- (c) In the City Library, but among some *Corregidor* fragments. A sketch on two staves, but obviously written with the string quartet in mind, five and a half bars, composed in Perchtoldsdorf on 15th May, 1889, the beginning of a "Second movement", *Langsam*, in E flat and 3/4 time.
- (d) In the National Library. A sketch on two staves, but with indications of orchestration, thirty bars composed in Döbling, on 5th January, 1893, the beginning of a "Second movement", *Langsam, klagend*, in G minor and 4/4 time.
- (e) Mentioned by Decsey, Vol. III, p. 153. Twenty-eight bars for orchestra, scored in Traunkirchen on 2nd July, 1893,⁹ of a "Second movement".
- (f) In the National Library. A sketch on two and three staves, with indications of orchestration, forty-three complete bars and two bars with

⁸ In a *Konvolut von Skizzen*.

⁹ The precise date is not given by Decsey, but I found it among the late Heinrich Werner's papers.

one part only sketched in, composed on 8th March, 1894. There is no heading. In G major and 6/8 time.

- (g) In the City Library. Five and a half pages in full score, in the hand of a copyist, the beginning of a "Third movement" *Tarantella*. The string parts are complete to the fortieth bar, the others to the thirty-seventh. Dated 2nd December, 1897.

Of these seven manuscripts (a) and (b) can tell us only that Wolf had the intention of incorporating the *string quartet* version into a larger work of at least three movements. Here it may be remarked that he seems to have disassociated the *Intermezzo* from his plans for this larger work. He thought well enough of the *Intermezzo* to send it to Grohe in 1890 for possible performance, together with the *Serenade*, in Mannheim, but from these larger schemes of a work in several movements he always excludes it.

The style of the writing in manuscript (c) leaves no doubt that Wolf here still had the string quartet in mind. This fragment, more than any of the others, makes one regret that the composer failed to continue and complete it. These few bars promise much:¹⁰



The idea of transcribing the string quartet version for small orchestra seems to have resulted from correspondence with Dr. Ludwig Strecker, of Schotts, in Mainz, who had taken over the publication of Wolf's songs. Strecker,¹¹ on 5th February, 1892, returned Wolf the manuscripts of some unparticularized "Quartets", which he regarded as of disproportionate technical difficulty. He suggests that Wolf should write something for orchestra. Wolf in his reply¹² (10th February) says: "I am now writing an *Italian Serenade* for small orchestra; unfortunately the piece would not be suitable for your firm, for—it suffers from originality." A footnote to Strecker's next letter, written on 13th February, says: "Send me the *Italian Serenade*." After this first reference to the orchestral version, in the letter to Strecker of 10th February, we hear no more about it until 2nd April, when we find, in a letter to Kauffman, the extended scheme of a work in several movements mentioned for the first time: "At present I am working on the instrumentation of the first movement of an *Italian Serenade* for small orchestra, for which two further movements must be composed." On 19th May, Wolf told Potpeschnigg, another friend: "I have recast the *Serenade*

¹⁰ The viola part is incomplete.

¹¹ I have made use of unpublished letters from Strecker to Wolf, in the Vienna City Library.

¹² Unpublished. From a copy kindly supplied by Messrs. Schott's Söhne, Mainz.

for complete orchestra, but am not yet at the end of the task." Perhaps "the task" here is the larger scheme, and not merely the orchestration of the first movement. We cannot be sure. There is no evidence to show precisely when this first movement, the *Italian Serenade* as we know it to-day, was completed in its orchestral form. It is likely enough that the scoring was finished in 1892.

Manuscript (d) on our list is an attempt to complete the *Serenade* of which there is no reflection at all in Wolf's letters. This sombre music, beginning with this theme in octaves,



against an uneasy rhythmic accompaniment, would have accorded ill with the brilliant first movement and the Tarantella that was to follow it. Its nearest relation among Wolf's works is the introduction to Margit's ballad in the incidental music to Ibsen's *Fest auf Solhaug*.

About fragment (e) we can only quote Decsey, who had clearly seen it. "The second movement, scored in Traunkirchen in 1893, comprises only 28 bars; its chief theme is a slow song of mild, languid beauty." That does not suggest the sombre lament (d) in orchestral dress. Wolf's remark about this fragment in a letter to Grohe: "The Adagio mourns still in its fragmentary opening bars . . .", however, would be compatible with (d), which is of about the same length as the fragment seen by Decsey. (I include in my total of thirty bars, three bars indicated by Wolf to be repeated.) This slow movement of 1893, however, may well have been based on other material, which has not survived among the sketches. Until the manuscript is found we cannot be sure.¹³

Wolf seems to have received a new impulse to complete the work in Berlin in January, 1894. Here again Strecker's letters to the composer are of interest. On 7th February, 1894, Strecker wrote that he was glad that Wolf was writing "something for orchestra", and not a "heaven-storming" piece. Then on 15th February he wrote again: "Don't forget the *Italian Serenade* when you get home." So Wolf must already have expressed his intention of taking up the orchestral *Serenade* again. On 2nd March, Wolf told Potpeschnigg: "I will now take in hand the completion of the *Serenade*", on 10th March he told Grohe: "Fortunately I am working on the *Serenade* and am happy", and on 16th March he wrote to the same friend: "Since a few days ago I have been working again at the *Italian Serenade*, for which I have composed a new movement." German Wolf literature has nothing to tell us about this new

¹³ The manuscript, as I am able to confirm from a detailed handwritten catalogue made by Edmund von Hellmer, was in the possession of the Vienna *Hugo Wolf Verein* after Wolf's death, with the fragment of the Tarantella [our manuscript (g)]. Only the latter was found when the *Wagner Verein*, the heirs of the *Wolf Verein*, handed this collection of manuscripts over to the Vienna City Library in 1939.

I have not yet given up hope of discovering this lost fragment—I have, in fact, a definite clue to its whereabouts—but post-war conditions in Austria do not, at present, permit the continuance of my researches.

IV

WOLF'S "THIRD ITALIAN SERENADE"

Among the almost inexhaustibly interesting collection of sketches in the Vienna National Library are two pages of manuscript paper headed: "Themes from October and November of the year 1897", containing no less than twenty-three musical ideas, mostly of the utmost banality, which the unfortunate composer, his brain teeming, blissfully set down in a condition of Euphoria in Dr. Svetlin's asylum. Two of the best of these ideas he used, in the evening of 18th December, for the first movement of an entirely unknown project—his "Third *Italian Serenade*". It is to be supposed that he reckoned the string quartet version as number one, and the orchestral version as number two. Here are the two themes used in this work:



The manuscript contains, if we include indicated repetitions, 170 bars. Another sheet of paper, in a different portfolio, has a continuation, but this is all scored through. These sketches for the third *Serenade* are very neatly written, on two staves, and contain indications of the orchestration. The quality of the music shows only too clearly the state of the composer's mind when he wrote it.

V

CONCLUSIONS

It may be convenient to have a summary of our findings in this inquiry into the history of the *Italian Serenade* and related works.

1. The as yet unpublished *Intermezzo* for string quartet was composed in 1886. It was begun in Vienna in April, and finished in Murau on 1st October.
2. No version of the *Italian Serenade* merely "thematically related" to the published works exists, or ever existed.
3. The published *Serenade* for string quartet was composed in Vienna, between 2nd and 4th May, 1887.
4. The published orchestral arrangement is by Wolf. It is first mentioned in a letter to Strecker of 10th February, 1892. Wolf was working on it in Döbling in April and May, 1892, and perhaps finished it at that time. Reger did no more than edit the work.
5. Fragmentary sketches for two different slow movements exist—one from Perchtoldsdorf, 15th May, 1889, for the quartet version; the other

from Döbling, 5th January, 1893, for the orchestral version. A fragment of a slow movement in full score, possibly distinct from both the above, was orchestrated in Traunkirchen on 2nd July, 1893, but this seems to have disappeared while in the care of the Vienna *Wagner Verein*.

6. A *presto* movement, "intended to take the place of a *scherzo*" in the *Serenade*, was composed in Vienna between 8th and 16th March, 1894. The sketch of the beginning still exists but the work as a whole has disappeared. It was perhaps destroyed by Wolf.
7. A *finale*, in the form of an orchestral Tarantella, was begun in Dr. Svetlin's asylum on 2nd December, 1897. It was Wolf's intention to introduce Denza's *Funiculi funiculà* in this movement, but up to the point where the manuscript breaks off this had not been done.
8. On 18th December, 1897, while still in the asylum, Wolf sketched out part of the first movement of a third *Italian Serenade*, which he never completed. It was to have been another orchestral work.

Reviews of Music

Benjamin Frankel (ed. Max Rostal). *Violin Sonata*, op. 13. (Augener.) 1946. 4s.

The outstanding merit of this work is a strength of creative imagination equal to its technical resource. So potent a combination is altogether exceptional. There are new works in plenty whose writing shows brilliant capability, but Frankel is among the few composers for whom one would unhesitatingly claim the further and rarer gift of significant individuality. There has been occasion to remark elsewhere that his unswerving independence has some affinity of outlook, though not of style, with the genius of Kerreth Quinn-Kinney, whose untimely death early in the war was a loss that British music could ill sustain. Frankel's Sonata takes a high place in its own right, and eliminates any feeling that the composer has set his wits against the limitations of an intractable medium. His three movements show every kind of ingenuity, yet each point is made without waste of notes, and in effect the whole scheme is designed on a basis of fine economy. The logic of Frankel's invention becomes realized in music of great urgency, strength and character. The performance of this Sonata presents sterner problems than may admit solution by any save expert violinists, but there is no reason why its subject-matter should present a specially thorny problem to alert listeners. I hope very much that so admirable a work, invested throughout with real distinction of thought and style, will obtain the suitably wide hearing to which it is entitled.

[Readers are reminded that Max Rostal has recorded this work on Decca K 1178 and 9. (Ed.)]

Eugene Goossens. *Phantasy Concerto*, op. 60, for Piano and Orchestra. (Chester.) 1946. 10s.

Eugene Goossens has given abundant proof that he is among those composers who never relinquish a technique of supreme assurance. Here his uncanny ease of resource needs little pretext beyond the opportunities for virtuosity which this Concerto offers to the pianist, and little comment except that the four sections of the work are informed by a geniality for which Goossens seldom receives credit. The Concerto demands first-rate quality of performance, and its acceptance into the repertoire depends solely upon adequate initiative among players themselves.

R. H.

Small Latin and Less Counterpoint!

BY

MAURICE J. E. BROWN

"Thou hadst small Latin and less Greek."

BEN JONSON ON SHAKESPEARE.

". . . counterpoint he was deficient in".

SIR GEORGE GROVE ON SCHUBERT.

It is not the intention of this essay to explore that harmless, but mostly fruitless byway of criticism, whereby bonds that are spiritual, or technical, or sociological, or even aesthetic, can be found between the work of creators in different artistic media: there will be no correlation attempted between the Shakespearean and the Schubertian material. But in much else which is external to their work, particularly in the writings of their critics, there are some striking and at times amusing parallels which may be worth noting.

Both are of course notorious in their own spheres for their lack of academic learning. It may have been a becoming modesty in Shakespeare which produced his words "my untutor'd lines" in the dedication to *The Rape of Lucrece*, but contemporary authors, and those of the succeeding century, were not so diffident. This is Beaumont's effort:

Here would I let slip
(If I had any in me) scholarship,
And from all learning keep these lines as clear
As Shakespeare's best are, which our heirs shall hear
Preachers apt to their auditors to show
How far sometimes a mortal man may go
By the dim light of Nature. . . .

Milton's famous reference in *L'Allegro* to Shakespeare's "native woodnotes wild" follows upon the words about Jonson's "learned sock"; the implication is that—as Pope suggests later—compared with Jonson, Shakespeare is unlearned. "A natural wit", notes John Ward, Vicar of Stratford from 1662–1681, "without any art at all." The presence of some noble defenders of Shakespeare's learning, such as Sir John Suckling, demonstrates the strength of the contrary view. All this can be paralleled many times over in Schubert's case: there are remarks such as those of Lachner, which produce the same air of complacence as do the lines of Beaumont:

"It's a pity Schubert did not learn as much as I did, otherwise with his extraordinary talent he would also have become a master."

Vincent d'Indy almost paraphrases John Ward's comment. He says: "Schubert must be considered as the type of genius without culture."

If we come to more recent criticisms then Cecil Gray's dictum that "Schubert is the most completely lacking of all the great composers in purely cerebral power" has at least its fellow in Tolstoy's "the dark cellarage of Shakespeare's mind".

To the critics this lack of academic stiffening in their work is naturally due to insufficient education. With charming naïveté Seward lets fall the following brick:

But, happier Stratford, thou
With incontestèd laurels deck thy brow;
Thy bard was thine, *unschool'd*. (The italics are his.)

In the preface to his "alteration" of *Troilus and Cressida*, John Dryden puts these words into the dramatist's mouth, paying him the kind of compliment which is usually known as back-handed:

Untaught, unpractis'd in a barbarous age,
I found not but created first the stage.

One of the prefatory poems in the First Folio of the plays is by a Leonard Digges. In 1640 a spurious edition of Shakespeare's poems was printed, to which Digges contributed a much longer poem that may have been intended for the First Folio. It contains these lines:

Next, Nature only help'd him, for look thorough
This whole book, thou shall find he doth not borrow
One phrase from Greeks, nor Latins imitate. . . .

Nature then, is Shakespeare's tutor: according to Ruzicka, Schubert "knew everything already. He has been taught by God". The organist and choir-master, Michael Holzer, supports this testimony—"Whenever I want to teach him anything new, I find he knows it already."

Schumann's pronouncement that Schubert was a "heaven-sent genius" is very neatly capped by a couplet of Endymion Porter:

Shakespeare and Ford from heaven were sent,
But Ben and Tom from College.*

But two critics may be quoted who thought that perhaps it was a good thing that there was this absence of systematic instruction. J. M. Robertson says of Shakespeare:

"His preparation was all the better for being non-academic: he had no august conventions to outgrow."

And of Schubert we find Ernest Newman writing:

"It is even possible that had Schubert tried in later life to master the technique of the schools he might have become a less interesting composer; his music might have lost in personality and spontaneity what it gained in artifice."

No play of Shakespeare's in its entirety pleased Dr. Johnson any more than any complete sonata of Schubert suited Dr. Parry. Here is what these two eminent Oxonians have to say on the matter:

* Ben Jonson and Tom Randolph.

"He has scenes of undoubted and perpetual excellence, but perhaps not one play which if it were now exhibited as the work of a contemporary writer would be heard to the conclusion."—DR. JOHNSON.

"There are movements, and even groups of them, which are of the supremest beauty, but hardly any one sonata which is completely satisfying throughout."—DR. PARRY.

The facility of production possessed by both poet and composer is obvious from the bulk of their work. Heminge and Condell, Shakespeare's fellow-players, write in their preface to the First Folio:

"His mind and hand went together: and what he thought he uttered with that easiness that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers."

MacFarren writes in a similar vein of Schubert:

"The committing his works to paper was a process that accompanied their composition like the writing of an ordinary letter, that is indited at the very paper."

Now while neither Shakespeare nor Schubert can claim a monopoly of ease and rapidity in composition, they are unique in that both have been chided for letting such gifts lead to a lack of self-revision:

"I remember the Players have often mentioned it as an honour to Shakespeare that in his writing (whatsoever he penned) he never blotted out line. My answer hath been, would he had blotted a thousand."—BEN JONSON.

"(Schubert) very rarely revised; it would often have been better if he had."—SIR GEORGE GROVE.

Together with this prodigality of writing we find a phenomenal carelessness where their manuscripts were concerned. Shakespeare died in 1616 with half his masterpieces unpublished, and the MSS. in nobody knows whose care. Those nightmarish years between 1616 and 1623: to think of *Anthony and Cleopatra* lying "unregarded . . . in corners thrown". And Schubert died, leaving a "quantity of old music" valued at about 10s., and containing all but four or five of his instrumental masterpieces. It is true that this pile of MSS. was in the hands of his brother Ferdinand; but as the years passed, and no general recognition came about, one feels that the position of that music was growing more precarious. Schumann's visit in 1838, which haled the C major Symphony into the light of day, takes on an almost melodramatic significance.

It is fitting perhaps, to conclude with their epitaphs, and to remark that in the case of no other poet, and no other composer, has so much comment, controversy and criticism been aroused, as in the case of Shakespeare's doggerel verse, and the equivocal proclamation on Schubert's gravestone. A dismal link.

Finally, the reader might care to examine the following encomium, and decide to which of the two men it was addressed:

He has expressions for the most subtle thoughts and feelings, even for the events and conditions of life; and innumerable as are the shades of human thought and action, so varied is his work.

The Seventh Symphony of Bruckner

An Analysis

BY

ROBERT SIMPSON

"INGENUOUS"? Mr. Rutland's view* must be probed. Bruckner has long been the fascinating subject of English critics' inattention. It is but fair to consider carefully at least one score, preferably of a work which has elsewhere gained the reputation of a masterpiece. Of the symphonies, that in E major is thought in Austria and Germany to be one of the finest. It is therefore a reasonable choice.

Bruckner's habit of beginning with string *tremolandi* has often been noted, sometimes in blame. It is actually no more remarkable than the fact that out of the 29 movements in Brahms' symphonies and concerti, no less than 14 end with the same type of wood-wind chord, occasionally combined with strings (*arco* or *pizzicato*). The openings of Bruckner's symphonies are as similar as the doorways of nine different cathedrals. In this case the entrance leads to a very lofty and light interior.

Ex. 1. (bar 3)



It is noteworthy that this long phrase modulates to the dominant before slipping back to the tonic for a fully scored counterstatement, in which the original tendency is checked by a beautiful cloudy elongation that finally settles on the dominant (note the distinction between "in" and "on" the dominant). The expected E major is, however, replaced by yet another attempt by the key of B to control the path of the music. Oboe and clarinet, supported by soft horns and trumpet, treat, with a new theme, the dominant as a key.

* Harold Rutland in *The Radio Times*, February 7th, 1947.

Ex. 2. (bar 51)

As the quotation shows, B major becomes B minor and in the following bar loses its slender foothold. For 18 bars the music drifts deliberately through a sequence of remote keys, reaching B major again at bar 69. That tonality is not yet secure (a 6/4 chord) and is this time carried on the crest of a wave into its flat supertonic region, C major. The phrase of Ex. 2 now has a new ending which becomes absorbed in a short but lovely triple counterpoint.

Ex. 3. (bar 81) (Leading parts only)

The Neapolitan C major falls easily back into B major (bar 89), which now shows a confidence that is not undermined by the "passing keys" into which it moves almost at once. These occupy 10 bars, and at bar 103 the iron grip of a deep pedal F sharp settles the firm entrenchment of the dominant, towards which a giant *crescendo* sweeps. Throughout this process Ex. 2 has prevailed. The first big climax of the symphony comes with a sudden hush and a rhythmic new theme in B minor.

Ex. 4. (123)

Passing through F sharp minor, D major and minor, and G flat major (= F sharp major), this rises quickly to a massive brass fanfare, afterwards closing gently in B major. The passage starting with Ex. 4 should not be thought a new section or "third subject". It is simply the release of tension caused by the victory of B, and provides a welcome change of movement. The purposes served by this passage and by its return later in the design are entirely dissimilar. Outward resemblances such as the change from tonic to dominant must not deafen the listener to the fact that this kind of behaviour is not characteristic of sonata style. The slow emergence of one key from a host of others is a new phenomenon in the field of symphony. It is commonly supposed that Bruckner's restatements are conventional and redundant gestures. That view ignores the truth that recapitulation is a prime element in any large-scale musical form, whether its movement is sonata-like or not. The rest of this movement will be heard to reinstate E major by a method similar to but longer than that which has just evolved B major. Tovey's assertion that Bruckner was helplessly fettered to useless sonata formulae

breaks down when it is understood that elements a lesser master might have made into a clumsy development, restatement, and *Coda*, are here welded into a single organic structure, the natural result of the crisis created by the opening section.

Two horns augment the closing notes of the last group (163) and a clarinet plays peacefully an inversion of Ex. 1 (a) in B major. An oboe freely imitates it while trombones provide gentle support. After a flute echo of figures from the Ex. 4 paragraph, the mode becomes minor with another entry of the clarinet-oboe-trombones combination. This time the flute hints at the dominant of A flat, but a solemn inversion of Ex. 2 follows in D minor on cellos. This breaks off and is heard again high in the violins in E minor, at present not recognisable as the tonic minor. It ceases at the same point as before and is resumed by the cellos in F sharp minor, whence it grows into a grandly sustained *cantabile* with a trend towards E minor. F sharp is soon shown to have been a supertonic key. Very definite emphasis is laid on E minor by the abrupt and quiet interruption of Ex. 4 in that key, on a solo flute with its mirror image in the basses (219). Violins join with a new counterpoint. E minor is then contradicted quickly by A minor, D major, D minor, C major, B flat major and A flat major. A drop to *ppp* finds the music waiting expectantly on the dominant of C. One beat's silence is broken by a tremendous outburst in C minor, Ex. 1 (a) being treated by free imitation all over the orchestra. For 16 bars this irruption lasts. When it subsides C minor is in firm control.

Here is a crucial point that shows plainly the difference between sonata principles and those obeyed by Bruckner who is now approaching the moment usually construed as a sonata restatement. The invasion by C minor has a lasting effect. It postpones indefinitely the return of home rule. Were Bruckner writing a sonata movement he would now need a very long and thorough preparation for the Recapitulation, which would come dramatically and with all the force of a long delayed and well planned uprising. In Bruckner's countries events do not turn on quick revolutions. His Under-ground movements work subtly and surely, gaining control with gradual persuasion.

The storm calms but there is no change of key. The first theme is given in C minor with euphonious echoes in the wood-wind and a gracious counterpoint in the first violins, and it then modulates to the dominant of D (257). In D minor the same thought recurs, now turning in the direction of A flat. Here there is a *crescendo*, but the expected A flat major is magically supplanted by the full E major, when the whole of Ex. 1 is stated for the first time since the outset (281). E major is now appreciable as the tonic because of Bruckner's strategic handling of E minor before the big C minor passage. But its position is not yet firm. The intervention of C minor has given Bruckner the reason for a startlingly beautiful change of key and has greatly increased the prospects of the movement as a whole.

Above the main theme floats its own inversion, and its second half is enriched by swelling trumpets, a sound of such splendid majesty as Bruckner

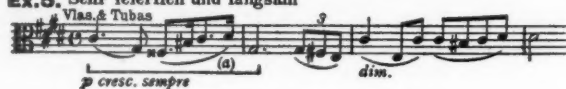
rarely surpassed elsewhere. As before there is a shift towards the dominant. This time it causes the biggest crisis of the movement. The integrity of the design is now at stake, since the B minor-major tendency has to be curbed.

The end of the theme drifts into dark mysterious modulations in which flute, basses and clarinet are heard through high *tremolandi*. The tonal balance is thus tilted entirely in the opposite direction, so that Ex. 2 must needs sound in an E minor that feels like the dominant minor of A minor. Its first 16 bars, newly scored, make the same passing modulations as before. From bar 335 (E major 6/3) two successive waves rise strongly to the very threshold of B major (362). This challenge of B major is so insistent that were Bruckner to state the group of Ex. 4 in E minor at this point it would certainly seem to be in the subdominant minor of B. That group originally acted as the climax of a process. There is no question of that as it now cuts in quietly and purposefully in G major. Through C major, E flat, and G flat, it passes to A major (375), and A is the key of its remainder. Before the paragraph can finish, there is a sudden *pianissimo* drop on to a low E, clearly the dominant of A (391). The composer is now in the position to exploit the natural tonic-dominant bent of his main theme. Most symphonists, had they reached this stage, might have been content to give the theme literally, allowing it to turn automatically from A to E. Not so Bruckner, who makes the hitherto rarely heard figure (b) from Ex. 1 sweep in a grand arch over a dominant (E) pedal that eventually turns into a tonic. Ex. 1 (a) is so reserved for the final climax, which rears itself nobly in E major, fully established for the first time since the beginning.

In spite of superficial visual resemblances, it should now be plain that this method of construction has little in common with sonata style. This plan is divisible into two main parts only, the first fostering a slow evolution of B minor and major out of a start that is not so much in E major as delicately poised on that key, and the second seeing the subtle resurgence of the true tonic, not without opposition from the pretender. When themes or thematic groups are restated their functions are changed in ways that would not be possible in sonata schemes. Ex. 1 becomes absorbed almost imperceptibly into a long process beginning at bar 189. Ex. 2, which at first was the means of setting up B major, later causes the final attempt of that key to regain its sway. Its original victorious outburst, Ex. 4, eventually defeats it by a sudden entry in G major and a modulation to A. Sir Donald Tovey wrote, "It is Bruckner's misfortune that his work is put forward by himself so as to present to us the angle of its relation to sonata form." The misfortune is not Bruckner's. It attends those who are fooled by chance semblances.

2nd Movement: *Adagio*.

Bruckner's slow movements always commence with two contrasting groups of material in contrasting keys. Thereafter each design is differently and unpredictably shaped. This one is in C sharp minor, a key which the first movement, with all its range of tonality, avoids. The opening is a mighty paragraph containing, among others, the following three important elements.

Ex. 5. Sehr feierlich und langsam**Ex. 6. (bar 4)****Ex. 7. (bar 13)**

Though the start is in C sharp minor the tonality during this passage moves slowly towards F sharp minor, a big climax being poised upon the frontier of that region. The *tutti* breaks off and a *diminuendo* leads solemnly to the second half of the opening section, settled happily in F sharp major with a change of time and pace and a new theme of remarkable beauty.

Ex. 8. (bar 36)

This soaring, heavenly episode secures the state of F sharp major. As it closes the light fades, giving way to the funereal strains of Ex. 5, again in C sharp minor. The ninth bar of the theme (85) becomes deflected into F sharp, and as if thoughts of past joys evoke deep longing, slow rising developments of Ex. 5 (a) and its inversion move towards a crisis, heralded by urgent trumpet calls and reached at bar 101 with a striking turn to C major. This has a bearing on later events. With a softening of tone Ex. 6 follows in the new key, scored with moving effect for flute and strings. More rising sequences involve a *crescendo* to the dominant of G. The expected G major is foiled by a statement of the whole of Ex. 6 (114) beginning in E flat and leading naturally to A flat. There follows a massive and typical Brucknerian *crescendo* based on successive steps in which Ex. 6 (a) appears in different keys and on different choirs of instruments. By way of A flat major, E major, F major, and F sharp major the long-delayed G major is attained in what is so far the weightiest climax of the movement (127). G major, which seems to be the final stage in the sequence of keys initiated by E major at bar 121, now dies away, revealing itself as the dominant of C. The suggestion of C, however, is but momentary, and the surprising entry of Ex. 8 in A flat major shows that G major is not the end of the tonal chain. This theme has here a darker colouring and is half concealed beneath a lovely new counterpoint (133). It is soon clear that A flat major is simply G sharp major, the home dominant, from which impressive cloudy modulations and hesitations drift into C sharp minor.

This return of Ex. 8 in A flat, besides being a satisfying and necessary recapitulation, is therefore also a gigantic dominant preparation for the resumption of the tonic. Bruckner rarely repeats ideas for the purpose of mere symmetry, but makes them perform organic functions in living forms. His practice in the first movement is here carried further. He might well have given another statement of Ex. 6 (a) in A flat at bar 128 or thereabouts, moved immediately to C sharp minor and written a complete (or slightly curtailed) restatement of the expository section (Exs. 5 to 8 inclusive), its keys redistributed, leading to a *Coda*. The ungainliness of such a scheme is obvious and is the sort of composition for which Bruckner is usually blamed by English critics. But, as will presently be shown, a further repetition of Ex. 6 (a) in A flat would, apart from its redundancy, ruin the still larger plan in Bruckner's mind.

C sharp minor brings back the great main theme surrounded by flowing string figures. The complete Ex. 6 follows and is the outset of one of Bruckner's most magnificent *crescendi*. Very slowly Ex. 6 (a) grows into an awesome climax. Again a sequence of keys is employed, one even more striking than before. From bar 164 onwards it runs as follows:—F minor to A flat, F sharp minor to B flat, G sharp minor to A major, D flat to E flat, and B major to the dominant of C sharp. Here the tension is immense. The G sharps in the bass change to A flats, and with a thrilling shock, the stupendous climax suddenly streams out in a shining C major.

It will be remembered that the previous high point in G major (127) showed signs of leading to C, but was prevented from so doing by Ex. 8 in A flat. The present higher peak stands in brilliantly clear relation to the other, as also to the still earlier emphasis on C major (101). But the final revelation is to come. As the G major *tutti* was the penultimate step in a straightforward series of keys, so this in C major shows itself in that light, and its quiet reaction is in D flat major (C sharp). The sublime lingering end of the movement is threefold. First, major turns to minor with a noble utterance of the tubas and horns, based on Ex. 6 (a), cavernous and grand. Then follows Ex. 7, not heard since its first statement, now no longer aspiring but ethereal and remote, floating high above a wonderful intermittent bass C sharp (*pizzicato*). Last, Ex. 5 (a) emerges for the first time in the tonic major.

3rd Movement: *Scherzo* and *Trio*.

The *Scherzo* is in A minor. This key, touched but once in the first movement and not at all in the *Adagio*, comes with powerful effect. Significantly, the two other important keys in the third movement have previously had little prominence. C minor, in which the first stage of the *Scherzo* ends, has not been heard since its huge outburst in the *Allegro moderato*, and F major, the key of the *Trio*, has hitherto been noticed only as an unobtrusive member of a few short key sequences. The freshness of the *Trio* is, moreover, made doubly sure by the strict exclusion of F major from the *Scherzo*, of which the succinct start states its complete thematic matter.

Ex. 9.
Sehr schnell

At bar 29 there is a quick shift to D flat, the first of a series of kaleidoscopic changes lasting for 24 bars. Then the dominant of C minor is reached (53) and after some preparation C minor itself drives home a very massive climax. The absence of distinct first and second groups does not prevent this section from being an extremely terse sonata exposition. The development shows more swift modulations, beginning softly in A flat with (a) and followed by (d). A repetition of this in G flat leads to inversions of (b) in A major, C sharp major, and E minor, the two latter keys being enmeshed in a *stretto* by contrary motion. The strings are meanwhile busy with derivatives of (a). Next come treatments of (d) and its companion (c). The pace eases slightly (*Etwas ruhiger*) and these two ideas become quite changed in character, passing through many modulations, inversions, and contrapuntal combinations before entering D flat, whence the trumpeting figure (b), in *stretto* with its own inversion, careers to the home dominant. The first horn and subsequently a trumpet display a free diminution of (b) (bar 165). The recapitulation, coming after a hush (185), is regular. Its first move is to B flat instead of D flat, and the final climax thus fixes A minor. Bruckner will concede a regular restatement only in a short piece. This *Scherzo*, with all its breadth, variety and unity, fills no more than four minutes. The relentless use of 4-bar rhythms is responsible for the hammering power of most of Bruckner's *Scherzi*, which are at least as strong as any since Beethoven.

The slower *Trio* is not, as is so often stated, lyrical. The true lyric has strophic regularity. It confines itself; it is a miniature. The term has been much misused by musicians, who normally apply it to anything with graceful melodic outlines. This *Trio* is binary in form since its first part is incomplete, starting in F after some introductory drum taps and ending with a delightful

Ex. 10. *vin. I.*

surprise in D major. The second part is begun by an inversion of Ex. 10 (a). Bruckner is very economical, rarely leaving this phrase, and treating it with delicate resource. The return to F major finds the original melody soaring

to a climax before finishing gently with flowing flute figures. The *Scherzo* is repeated in full.

4th Movement: *Bewegt, doch nicht schnell.*

This blends solemnity and humour in festive grandeur. It is unique in form and difficult to describe in spite of the directness of its address. The same subtlety of tonal organisation is evident here. As in the first movement, the main theme foreshadows by its modulation the key-system to follow.



This moves almost at once, as shown, from E to the key a major third higher, A flat. The next bar (10) cancels this by asserting E minor, whereupon the theme begins again in the dominant, B major. It now modulates with another *crescendo* to B flat (19), whence it starts once more. Then come two more steps to major mediant, B flat to D major and D to F sharp major, leading to a bold progression which, rising, hits the dominant of G flat (F sharp). Before the music can settle there it subsides on to the dominant of F (33). Instead of F major (or minor), however, there is a richly modulating chorale, commencing in A flat major and thus consolidating the first change from E to A flat.

Ex. 12. (bar 35)



Ex. 13. (bar 51)



Though this chorale seems to modulate casually it is centred on A flat, which is soon confirmed by Ex. 13 in a return through the dominant of F. (It is, of course, possible, though not easy, to fix a key without recourse to its own dominant.) The resumption of Ex. 12 occasions a small rise in temperature which falls to the dominant of A. At this the first *tutti* of the *Finale* bursts out in A minor with the following Herculean derivative of Ex. 11 (a).

Ex. 14. (bar 93)



A recurrence of this a semitone higher initiates a fully scored paragraph that strides through F minor, B flat minor, A minor, and the dominant of D

minor, culminating in two powerful brass fanfares on the successive dominants of G and A flat. It appears as if this cardinal stage will end with a climax in A flat. Ex. 11 (b) does enter in that key, but its very nature forces it to rise to its major mediant, C major. After a short-lived effort by A flat to retake control (117-127), the music dies away mysteriously in a C major which is not entirely free from its earlier associations as the dominant of F. Ex. 11 (b) is changed into a new figure.

Ex. 15. (bar 133)



At present the three most important keys asserted have been (i) the tonic, E major, (ii) A flat major, and (iii) C major. They are clearly related as a series of major mediants. Bruckner immediately illuminates this relationship by giving a soft free augmentation of Ex. 15 in A flat and repeating it at once in E major (147-162). The threads are being drawn more closely. Of the three keys A flat has been most emphatic, E major least. The tonic and its environs are now entered. At bar 163, in the subdominant minor, there is a humorously simple inversion of Ex. 11 ending in A major and overlapping with an equally playful inverted diminution of the chorale whose second phrase is placed on the home dominant. Then Ex. 11 appears in E major in *stretto* by contrary motion, threaded by a quaver counterpoint. A straining towards A flat is checked by a *crescendo* and a second tremendous *tutti* on Ex. 14 makes a forcible entrance in the dominant minor. The counterstatement of its first phrase lands on the border of A flat, for which the influence of the tonic now proves too strong. Its E flat becomes D sharp and the rest of the *fortissimo* stalks gigantically around home territories, crashing into a terrific unison on the dominant of E (the notation here is in flats, but does not deceive the ear). There is a silent pause.

The echoes of the Titanic sound have hardly died when the chorale begins quietly in C major. The melody is so shaped that this time its second phrase modulates smoothly to F major. Strictly, the third phrase would follow on the dominant of G, but it continues in F, thus emphasising the original habit of C major to behave as the dominant of F. This tiny point made, the theme becomes its old modulating self again and Ex. 13 falls into the homely region of A major (over a pedal E). Slight tension is created by the intervention of the dominants of F and A flat, but they are repudiated by Ex. 11 (b) in A major. This is the start of what would be a mighty *Coda* if this amazing movement were divisible into sections. The theme, as it makes its *ritardando* on the edge of F sharp, is crowned by the brass. It emerges, travelling in the direction of A flat and is swept up by another great *tutti*, driving towards the submediant. At bar 267 there is a phrase in E major, reminiscent of the fourth Symphony. After a blazing contrapuntal combination in C sharp major there is a quick drop to *pp* and Ex. 11 jumps out in the tonic, now unmistakable. As at first it rushes to A flat, the brass marking the *ritenuto* again; it restarts for the first

and only time in A flat major, modulating this time to G (this corresponds to the move from B major to B flat in bars 11 to 19). The orchestra is wonderfully vivid as the theme flashes in many brilliant shapes towards the home dominant. The astonishing mass of tone ceases abruptly as that region is gained, and then the main theme, merging with Ex. 1 (a), resounds in the vast spaces of E major as, with glorious fanfares, it rings the final majestic climax.

This analysis may perhaps indicate the futility of expecting the music of Bruckner to react to the same tests as that of Brahms and most other nineteenth century symphonists. That error was made by a most intelligent critic, the late H. C. Colles in a discussion of the subject in the *Oxford History of Music*. There the opening movement of this work was dissected and found to be the lamentable result of Bruckner's ignorance of Brahms' principles of composition. Although Bruckner and Brahms did not understand each other in Vienna, it may well be that in the pleasanter regions where, doubtless, all are friends, they are both laughing at the absurd rivalry that once separated them.

Reviews of Music

Mátyás Seiber. *Sonata da Camera*, for Violin and Cello. (Chester.) 1945. 5s.

These pages are a capital reminder of the limits that must be acknowledged when ingenuity has done its best. The treatment shows great skill in writing for an instrumental combination that offers many pitfalls, and it is hard to see how the composer could have laid out his material to finer advantage. Such music will certainly attract players whose high abilities are accompanied by a zest for adventurous resource, and it may also be expected to hold the attention of listeners who delight in this form of investigation. There is no difficulty in ceding to the Sonata almost every merit except that of something notable to say, and it is the composer's virtue that we almost forget this limitation in the persuasiveness of his address.

R. H.

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The Music of Cecil Gray

BY

R. GORER

I AM one of the few thousand people in this country who has actually read Oskar Schmitz's *Der Land ohne Musik*. Why he gave our country this opprobrious title was not because it was impossible to hear music in England, but because it was regarded as an exotic import. "England has no native music". This was untrue even in 1906 and is still more so now, but it was not a wildly silly statement. It is still much easier for a writer or a painter to support himself by the practice of his art than it is for a musician. Moreover there are some forms of composition that cannot get a hearing in this country even to-day. If we had a Chopin living in England it is doubtful if many of us would know about it as the solo pianist still seems to regard Debussy as *le dernier cri*, justifiably as far as I know. In any case, the position of a modern Chopin would be rosy compared with that of a modern Gluck or a contemporary Meyerbeer. The born opera composer, who happens to be born an Englishman, is in a pitiable plight. It is true that, after a composer has become sufficiently well-known in the concert hall, we will occasionally suffer the production of some native opera; but if it survives for more than one season without adventitious aids the phenomenon causes surprise and we talk of a renaissance of English opera, as if the poor girl had ever had a naissance. The fact that there are adequate economic reasons for this may excuse opera managements, but cannot be regarded as valid artistically. Such being the case it need not excite surprise that the compositions of Cecil Gray are a closed book to the musical public. We are assured, by Ernest Newman among others, that no composer of genius has ever lacked public appreciation. This is not strictly true. It is correct, perhaps, to say that no music of genius will lack public support in the long run, but there is nothing to prevent your genius from never coming before the public at all. A symphonist in Italy or a composer of chamber music in France in the first half of the last century would have had as little chance of getting before the public then, as the composer of opera has now. I have no doubt that if Gray's operas were adequately performed their evident merits would soon gain not only public appreciation, but even that professional disdain which forms so large a part of a composer's success. As it is, however, Gray's music is unpublished and apart from the fragmentary broadcast of *The Women of Troy* in 1944, unperformed.

Although his music is unheard the name of Cecil Gray is not exactly unknown in musical circles. Indeed, in some of them it produces an effect similar to that of Somerset Maugham in the Malay peninsula. From his criticisms it is possible to recognise the qualities he admires in music and which will be found in his own. His writings suggest that among his favourite

composers are the fifteenth-century Flemings, Berlioz and Sibelius. That is to say he likes elaborate counterpoint, brilliant orchestration and a well-developed sense of form. These qualities will all be found in his music. As far as the first quality is concerned he is quite unable to resist a thematic combination even though it should be psychologically or dramatically inappropriate. He also delights in sounding the same theme augmented and diminished simultaneously. There are obvious dangers in this procedure. It may lead to the nullity of a Reger or a Raimondi and to the sort of music that can be played *cancrizans* and a *rovescio* without making any more sense one way up than the other. Fortunately this pitfall is avoided by Gray's melodic sense. It is no accident that he admires Bellini and if a composer has a well-developed sense of melody he will be safe from the fabrication of material suitable for counterpoint exercises. The brilliance of Gray's orchestration is to me the most surprising quality of his music. It must be as instinctive with him as it was with Berlioz, as he is no reproducer of other men's effects. His over-riding sense of form—the hallmark of a classical composer—will become evident in the subsequent analyses and need not be further insisted upon.

Gray's early compositions included some songs, some piano pieces and two symphonic poems. However, they failed to satisfy the composer and have all been destroyed. The only work that survived the holocaust was the opera *Deirdre*, which was completed about 1926. It is an astonishing work for any man to produce in his thirties, though it is not to be compared with its successors. The opera is in three acts and requires the normal orchestra and six solo singers. The plot recounts the episode of Deirdre's flight from Connacher, King of Ulster, with Naoise to Scotland and their return culminating in the treacherous murder of Naoise. The construction of the opera is simple enough to describe. Each scene has its own thematic material, usually two melodies that can be combined contrapuntally; these are subjected to every form of musical development for the duration of the scene, after which the process is repeated. This method is followed for the first two acts and the first half of the last act. The opera ends with Deirdre's lament over the murdered Naoise and during this the orchestra recalls the themes of the first two acts, thereby giving them an added and poignant significance. In description this sounds rather like the final scene of *Götterdämmerung*, but Gray's themes and procedure are so dissimilar to Wagner that the comparison is misleading. The music itself was influenced by the folk songs of the Hebrides and is thus remarkably successful in instilling the atmosphere of the period. In spite of this I must confess to finding some of the melodies somewhat less satisfactory than in the composer's later works. Indeed, in spite of its magnificent final scene and a large number of other fine episodes, *Deirdre* does not seem to me to be a wholly satisfactory work. If the story of Deirdre has any interest it is as a love story and to write an opera on such a theme without a single love scene may be a *tour-de-force*, but surely such ingenuity is rather misplaced. It is true that love is a somewhat banal subject for opera, but in this case it is surely implicit in the theme. The nearest approach to the subject in the opera is in a scene where Connacher pleads with the silent

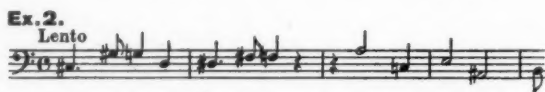
disdainful Deirdre. The scene is introduced by this fine melody on the cor anglais (Ex. 1) and the whole scene is on the same high plane. This episode



apart, the whole subject is skirted round as though it were syphilis or some other shock to delicate susceptibilities. The characters are not drawn very distinctly: Deirdre herself is not a very distinct personality and the other figures remain shadowy. I do not know if this was intentional. Finally, in spite of the beauty of its language the libretto is not very good. It is far too static. The first half of each act is taken up with someone prophesying what will happen in the second half. In performance, of course, the beauty of the music would do much to mitigate these drawbacks, but I do not think it could entirely obviate them.

His next opera, *The Temptation of St. Anthony*, was composed between 1935 and 1937. The libretto is adapted from the 1874 *Tentation de Saint Antoine* by Flaubert. The work is laid out on the largest scale and requires this huge orchestra: piccolo, 2 flutes, bass flute, 2 oboes, cor anglais and heckelphone, 3 clarinets and bass clarinet, 3 bassoons and double bassoon, 6 horns, 4 trumpets, 4 trombones, euphonium and bass tuba, 4 harps, 2 timpani, a large battery of percussion, 16 first and 16 second violins, 12 violas, 12 celli and 8 double-basses. There are twelve solo singers, though some of these parts could be doubled.

The work opens with a short prelude which draws attention to the key of the opera, E. An enormous chord on the tonic, dominant and subdominant is slowly built up from the depths to the heights of the orchestra. This is followed by a short passage based on the interval of the augmented fourth and then by a carillon-like figure which is played simultaneously in semibreves, minims, crotchets and quavers. The prelude ends with a *fortissimo* E major chord, which gradually dies away. The main theme of the opera is now given



out in bare octaves. Owing to what has gone before it can be related to E major but it is also a twelve-note row and can be treated as such whenever the composer so inclines. That is to say that he can move from tonality to atonality at will. It is also worth pointing out that of the twelve notes, half move at chromatic intervals and that the theme ends with a descending augmented fourth. The whole of the opera is to be built on this theme either in variations or in counterpoints to it. However, this gives no sense of monotony as in many cases the counterpoints are presented apart from the theme and so have an independent value of their own. The opera opens with

a long monologue for Anthony and when he is recalling his mother and his love, Ammonaria, this variant appears.

Ex.3.

than by anyone else, but clings to his cross and Apollonius departs. His talk of other religions has roused Anthony's curiosity and these now appear in a series of visions. This series is treated as a series of *intermezzi* in the main lay-out of the work. Each religion has its own orchestra and the themes themselves are not necessarily either variants or counterpoints to Ex. 2. (In point of fact, two of them are variants and two are built on the tonic, dominant, subdominant formula of the prelude. The others are more or less independent.) The first apparition is of various idols which are accompanied only by percussion instruments and a four-part chorus in the unusual rhythm of 11/8. They give place to the goddess Isis, a contralto, who sings a lovely lament accompanied by a contralto choir and four harps. The rhythm is now 7/4. Next comes a male-voice chorus of the worshippers of Cybele accompanied by flutes, clarinets and castanets. As a counterpart to this episode there is a female chorus of the mourners for Atthis. They are accompanied by the oboes and bassoons. Next appears the Buddha, a solo bass, accompanied by the strings playing in 32 parts, to which the notes of the glockenspiel are occasionally added. In 5/4 rhythm accompanied by the horns, euphonium, bass tuba and the full chorus, appear the Hellenic Gods. Then comes the God of the Hebrews, speaking through the tenors and basses singing in unison and accompanied by trumpets, trombones and timpani. Finally the devil appears and the orchestra brings us back to the original scheme. The devil, who is given the speaking voice at length abandons Anthony. We now have a partial recapitulation. New material comes in when Anthony, musing on the past, finds that the thought of Ammonaria still arouses his desire. He contemplates suicide and there appear first Death and then Lust, the one urging him to it, the other against it. For this episode, too, the orchestra is divided; the dark instruments—oboes, bassoons, violas, basses, tuba and euphonium—accompanying Death (contralto), while the flutes, clarinets, trombones, violins and celli accompany Lust (soprano). Finally, the two sing together and the orchestra re-coalesces. It is significant that when Lust says "Even on earth there are places of such beauty as to make thee wish to press the whole world to thy heart" we should hear Ex. 4 in the orchestra, and indeed it plays a large part in the duet. Anthony repels them both. He muses on the origins of life and there appear a series of mythological beings; the Chimera, the Sphinx (given curiously to the solo bass), the Astomi, the Blemmyes, the Pygmies, the Sciapods and the Cynocephali. Finally, comes a vision of the sea palpitating with life of all description. This is most effectively represented by chromatic scales, descending in quavers in the bass, ascending in semiquavers in the trebles and descending in demi-semiquavers from the highest treble to the lowest bass. Anthony expresses his joy in the work of the creator, a heavenly choir sings "Hallelujah" and the opera ends with the same carillon-like figure with which it began.

The foregoing gives a rough idea of the formal content of the work, but naturally cannot indicate its aesthetic value. I must therefore give some subjective opinions. First, it must be observed that the work is practically un-representable. The composer's idea was to have the role of Anthony

sung by a living man and entrust the visions to the cinematograph. This would be the only way, but even so it would be very difficult. Take for example this stage direction, which is one of the more practicable.

"Strolling pedlars, porters, ass drivers run and jostle together. Here and there is a priest of Osiris with a panther skin upon his shoulders, a Roman soldier with a bronze helmet and many negroes. At the thresholds of the shops women pause, artisans work. The crowd suddenly become motionless and turn their eyes towards the west, whence enormous whirlwinds of dust are seen to approach. It is the coming of the monks of the Thebaid, all clad in goatskins, armed with cudgels and shouting a war song. They have come to kill the Arians."

This is an accurate translation of Flaubert, but it does rather suggest the million-dollar epic and since this whole episode is only to last about five minutes, it intimates a certain insouciance for commercial considerations on the composer's part. Even with the cinema I do not see how it is possible to create the effect Flaubert and Gray have in mind with the numberless mythological creatures. However, I can conceive that this portion of the libretto could be rewritten so as to preserve the essence of the passage and yet take away the taint of the ridiculous. The music is so fine that it would undoubtedly make a powerful effect sung by ladies and gentlemen in evening dress. But to make its full effect it requires visual presentation. This is realisable, but is scarcely liable to appeal to an impresario as a commercial proposition. A pity, as the work can fairly be described as a musical masterpiece. It is not flawless, but the only opera of this century I can find to compare with it is Busoni's *Doktor Faust* and the comparison is not to the late master's advantage. As an example of musical thinking and construction it is comparable to *Wozzeck*, though in all other respects the two works are disparate. I would not claim that there have not been more effective operas composed in the last fifty years, but of its kind the *Temptation* is unique. Although none of the music is bad there are certain passages which tower over the rest; such scenes as the opening monologue, the scene with the heresiarchs, the procession of deities and the final wordless chorus of marine monsters seem to me to be superior to all else in the work.

The faults that might be found, apart from one or two trifling lapses into faulty declamation, lie in the excessive chromaticism of the music and the somewhat unsympathetic treatment of the voice. The chromaticism is imposed by the subject. The constant uncertainty in which Anthony finds himself can best be represented by a corresponding uncertainty in the tonal balance, but even so it is arguable that the number of passages built on chromatic intervals is overdone. The only way I can see that this could be rectified would be by treating the procession of the Gods with more freedom. This would not noticeably lessen the number of chromatic passages, but it would provide a certain relief. When I criticise the vocal line as being unsympathetic, I would not be taken as implying that it is badly written. It is perfectly singable, but we are left with the feeling that the composer does not regard the voice as having the same capacity for emotion as the oboe or the horn. Such incidents as the song of the Queen of Sheba or the Lament of Isis throw into

Ex. 7.
Agitato
 Solo Voices



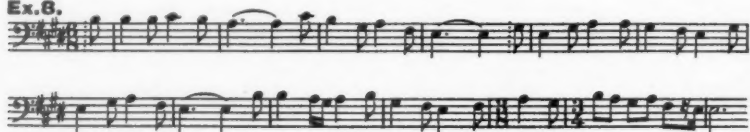
connotations. Talthybius re-enters and hesitantly breaks the news that Astyanax must be killed. Andromache's lament over him is, in my opinion, the loveliest thing in the opera. The tension is relieved by the next choric ode. Menelaus now enters to claim Helen. She tries to excuse herself and is fiercely attacked by Hecuba. It seems to me a pity that the composer should have introduced the *passacaglia* in this scene, as dramatically it is unnecessary. However, it is given a new colour by being entrusted to the oboes and flutes. The last choric ode is now sung, at first *a capella*. Grecian soldiers come on with torches and set fire to the city. For one moment Hecuba stands aside from her grief to reflect that their fate will be a source of inspiration to future artists; a piece of doubtful psychology and, in my opinion, a passage where the librettist might have neglected Euripides. As their town flames, Hecuba and the Women of Troy are led into captivity; the triumphant trumpet calls of the victorious Greeks mingling with their lamentations. As might be expected this final scene is constructed on a tissue of themes already heard, the most prominent being the figure of the prologue, Ex. 6, and of course the *passacaglia* which brings the opera to its close.

It might be thought that an opera written on so tragic a theme, the gloom relieved except by the elegiac choral odes, might prove monotonous, but this is not so. First, it is very short, playing for only 90 minutes, and second, though the subject is tragic the tragedy is not undiversified. The exaltation of Cassandra and the maternal grief of Andromache contrast with the laments of Hecuba, and the episode of Helen and Menelaus gives an additional swing to the emotional pendulum. The opera is at once slighter and more perfect than the *Temptation*, to which it stands like the eighth to the ninth Symphony of Beethoven or like Busoni's *Turandot* to his *Doktor Faust*. It seems to me practically flawless. Going through the score I found that a remarkably large portion of it was written in 12/8 rhythm, but as there was no sense of rhythmic monotony, I cannot see that this does any harm. Apart from the difficulty of finding a singer sufficiently talented to undertake the role of Hecuba, there is no reason, apart from our native idiosyncrasy, why this opera should not see production.

Gray's latest composition is a symphonic prelude for orchestra which was composed in 1944 and 45. It is built on two themes and their counterpoints and though, as we shall see, little of the thematic material is new, it is set in a new light by its treatment. The main theme of the first section is a slight variant of Ex. 5, but the same theme in diminution is of almost equal importance. These are developed at length and then with a key change from

D flat to E major the second theme enters:

Ex. 8.



This is a mediaeval pilgrim's song "O Roma Nobilis", but there are reasons to suppose that it is much older. It is stated first of all unaccompanied on the lower strings and then by the wood-wind accompanied by the harp. It is then subjected to contrapuntal treatment and among the counterpoints Ex. 4 may be noted. We then return to the original theme and there is a recapitulation which is varied by the counterpoints appearing in different positions. The work culminates in a *coda* in which all the thematic material is combined.

Such articles as this should really not be written. It can be of no service to the composer to see the result of years of work dismissed with a few hundred words of praise and blame tacked on to a perfunctory analysis. I should like to think that I have interested the reader in the remarkable quality of this music, but if I have it is a curiosity which cannot be satisfied. The music is not published and as most publishers prefer quick returns to a successful long-term investment, it is not very probable that it will be published at least until the works are performed. If this music ever emerges from its present obscurity I have no doubt that it will long survive among the most significant creations of our epoch and also as a source of income to an enterprising publisher. However, as artistic and commercial considerations, very properly, are incompatible, the prospect of the operas being either performed or published must be considered remote.

Apart from the uselessness* of such articles as this to either composer or reader, it must be recognised that they cannot give an impression of unbiased criticism. No artist is liable to lend his manuscripts to a perfect stranger and this results in the feeling that the writer must be prejudiced by his acquaintance with the composer. It is no good my making elaborate disclaimers: they would not be believed and, indeed, it must be evident that musical criticism that can benefit neither composer nor reader must have been written purely to satisfy the writer. In fact this is the truth. While fully aware of the ineffectiveness of my gesture, I would not like to remain silent in the face of so much magnificent music. To adapt the words of Henry Miller: "What I say is only a drop in the bucket, but it may have its consequences. The important thing is that the bucket should not have a hole in it. Well I believe that such a bucket can be found. I believe it is just as possible to rally men around a vital reality as it is around the false and illusory. The effect of Gray's music upon me was not lost. And perhaps my words will not be lost either."

Let us hope that this optimism is justified.

* The Editor disagrees.

The Euing Musical Collection

BY

HENRY GEORGE FARMER

ONE of the finest collections of its kind¹ of music and books on music in the British Isles is that presented by William Euing (1788-1874) to the old Anderson's University in Glasgow, which later became merged into the Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College, now the Royal Technical College. This was the home of this collection until 1936, when it was transferred to the University, where it is now housed in a special room. Although this assemblage of rare and scarce items has been given special notice by bibliographers on more than one occasion,² in no instance have its manuscripts been signalized. Eitner has generally indicated its more precious printed books, although one would have to scrutinize every entry in the ten volumes of his *Quellen Lexikon* to know them. Even then, save in one instance, he has ignored the manuscripts, possibly for the simple reason that the worthless printed catalogue of the *Euing Collection*, which has been a standing joke among bibliographers and bibliophiles, does not indicate them beyond a mere entry which reads,—“Manuscript Music: Various pieces, including autographs of composers, etc.” One shudders to think what a man like Eitner must have thought of British bibliographers after perusing this “very poor catalogue”, as Brown and Stratton once dubbed the *Catalogue of the Musical Catalogue of the late Wm. Euing, Esq.* (Glasgow, 1878), which is still the only guide that we have in this year of grace to the collection. Yet in 1906 it was complained (see *Grove*) that this catalogue was “altogether inadequate” and “displayed the grossest ignorance”, but the hope was expressed “that a new catalogue would be printed”, an expectation which was, with optimism, reiterated so recently as 1940.³

It is true that *Grove* enumerates a few of the rare and scarce items among the 5,000 odd volumes on the Euing shelves, but the rarest of these are ignored, whilst no information is vouchsafed about the manuscripts. Hubens, in his article in the *Rivista musicale* (1916), is much more enlightening, but here again the information is not contained in English, nor in a work generally accessible to research workers. For this reason a more detailed list of the treasures of the *Euing Collection* seems to be called for.

The *Euing Collection* is particularly rich in incunabula and rare printed books, the former being represented by particularly fine examples. There is not, alas, a Tinctoris (c. 1474), but there are seven examples of Gaforius, from the . . . *Theoricum opus armonice discipline* (1480), extremely rare, and the oldest dated music book, and its kindred *Theorica musice* (1492) and *Practica*

¹ It contains no books published after 1874.

² Mason, *Public and Private Libraries of Glasgow* (1885); *Grove, Dictionary of Music* (all editions); Brown and Stratton, *British Musical Biography* (1897); *Rivista musicale* (1916).

³ III, 167.

musice (1496) to *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum* (1518). Neither is there an example of the early double process music printing of Ulrich Hahn (1476), but there is the earliest specimen of block printed music in the *Musices opusculum* (1487) of Burtius, and the rarer *Flores musice* (1488) of Spechtshart and the later issue (c. 1495).

Then there is the first Boethius (1492), whilst among other authors of classical antiquity are Martianus Capella (1539), Euclid (1557), Psellus (1557), Aristoxenus and Ptolemy (1562), Plutarch (1570) and Aristoxenus (1616).

Of the first of the sixteenth-century books are the *Opus aureum* (1501) of Wollick, the *Clarissima plane* (1501 and 1504) of Praspergius, the later issue of the *Margarita philosophica* (1508) of Georg Reisch, and the curious *Divina proportione* (1508) of Luca di Pacciolo. Then come a scarce tract on plain chant, the *Utilissime musicales regule* (1511), the second edition of the *Opusculum musices* (1513) of Simon de Quercu, the later issue of *Musica libris demonstrata quatuor* (1514), and its ghost the *Musicae rudimenta* (1516) of Thurnmayer (really Nicolas Faber), the *Liber heroicus* (1515) of Boemus, and the *Musicae institutiones* (1515) of Luscinius, as well as his *Musurgia* (1536).

The 'twenties bring us to the *Isogoge* (1520) of Galliculus, with its re-issue as the *Libellus* (1546). They are bound up with the second edition of the *Enchiridion musicae mensuralis* (1520) of Rhaw, of which there is also a later issue (1538). After these come the later imprint of the *Opera nova* (1528) of Fregoso, and the *Musica theorica* (1529) of Fogliano.

A rare item is *Ein kurtzer Ausszug der Music* (1531) by Johann Singer, whilst the curious *De incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum et artium* (1531) of Agrippa von Nettesheim has to be noted because of its English versions. Worthy of mention are the *Motetti* (1532) of Jacques Moderne, the *Melodiae prudentianae* (1533) of Nicolas Faber, and the *Varia carminum genera* (1534) of Senflus. Equally important is the beautifully printed *Rerum musicarum opusculum* (1535) of Froschius, and the rare edition of the *Regula musice plane* (1538) of Bonaventura. Then there are the *Rudimenta musicae* (1538) and the later *Musica* (1577) of Listenius, as well as the fairly scarce edition of the *Toscanello in musica* (1539) of Aaron.

A distinctly rare item of the period is *Ein hupsch new Gesangbuch* (Ulm, 1538). It is probably the earliest Protestant hymn-book, and was used by the Picard Brethren of the Moravian church at Fulnek near the Silesian border. It would seem to be the only known complete copy. It has an interesting associational value since it originally belonged to John Sebastian Bach and then to his son Karl Philipp Emanuel. Dr. Charles Burney acquired it in 1772, possibly from the latter owner, when he was in Germany.⁴ At Burney's death in 1814 it went to John Stafford Smith, on whose decease (1838) it fell into the hands of the hymnologist W. H. Havergal, and when he died (1870), Euing became the possessor.

Of the many manuals of plainsong of the period there are examples of the *Cantorinus* (1540) and later editions (1550, 1566), as well as its reissue as the

⁴ Burney, *Hist. Mus.*, III, 31.

Compendium musices (1549). More interesting are the *Breve introduttione di musica misurata* (1540), a rarity, of Giovanni del Lago, and the *Fior angelico di musica* (1547) of Angelo da Picitone.

Next must be mentioned the *C[h]oralis Constantini* . . . (1550-57) of Heinrich Isaac, the *Ad musicam practicam introductio* (1550) of Heinrich Faber, and the *Due dialoghi della musica* (1553) of Dentice. An extremely rare item is two early dramas with music, the *Petriscus* and *Lazarus Mendicus* (1553) of Macropedius. The *Hymni* (1555) of Kethner, the *Musicae epitome* (1557) of Wonnegger, and *L'antica musica* (1557) of Vicentino are worthy of notice.

A scarce tract, not mentioned by Eitner, is Mattheo Zerer's *Oratio de cantu ecclesiastico* (1560). There is also the *Illuminata* (1562) of Aiguino as well as his later *Tesoro illuminato* (1581). The argumentative *Bellum musicale* (1563) of Claudius Sebastiani also finds a place together with the select *Thesaurus musicus* (Nuremberg, 1564), and the rare *Arte de tañer fantasia* (1565) of Tomaso de Santa Maria.

Quite a spate of music books follow:—the *Latinae canciones* (1570) of Ivo de Vento, the *Cantiones sacrae* (1571) of Jacob Kerle, the fourth book of the *Madrigali* (1573) of Pietro Vinci, and the *Chansons* (1575) of Ronsard set by Nicolas de la Grotte. Of course, there is the famous book of Salinas, *De musica* (1577) to close this decade.

The second issue of the *Erotematum musicae* (1580) of Beurhusius finds a home here, cheek by jowl with the *Ballarino* (1581) of Caroso, which is valuable for the history of the dance and the lute. The early books of Zarlino (1558 *et seq.*) are wanting from these shelves, but we possess his complete works in *Di tutte l'opere* (1589). His famous pupil Vincent Galilei, is well represented by the *Dialogo* (1581), the second edition of the *Fronimo* (1584), and the *Discorso* (1589). Turning to music *per se* we find the *Sacrae cantiones* (1582) of Orlando di Lasso, and the *Madrigali* (1582) of Filippo di Monte. Of the Netherlandish contrapuntist Jacob van Wert there are two examples, the *Modulationum sacrarum* (1583) and the *Canzonette villanelle a cinque voci* (1589), although the tenor part is missing.

England is represented during the decade by the Oxford tract *The Praise of Musicke* (1586) and the *Apologia musices* (1588) of John Case, to which we must add the *Madrigals* (1597) of Weelkes, and the *Musica transalpina* (1588-97) of Yonge. Nor can we omit the *Psalmes, sonets, and songs of sadnes and pietie* (1588), *Songs of sundrie natures* (1589), and the *Liber Secundus sacrarum Cantionum* (1591) of Byrd. The scarce *Carmen de musica* (1588) of Pichselius must not be missed and the *Compendio della musica* (1588) of Tigrini, as well as the *Ragionamento di musica* (1588) and *Dialogo* (1595) of Pietro Pontio deserve mention.

The last decade of the century brings the *Madrigals* (1590) of Thomas Watson, "the first sett of Italian madrigalls Englished . . . after the affection of the Noate". Then we have the *Melopoeia* (1592) of Calvisius, the *Madrigali* (1595) of Marenzio, the second edition of the *Agonosticon* (1595) of Pierre Faber, the *Prattica di musica* (1596) of Zacconi, the *Cantiones sacrae* (1597) of Hans Hassler, the *De Vitiis vocis* (1597) by Codronchius, a little-known work

dealing with the vocal organs, the *Madrigals* (1598) of Wilbye, the scarce *Musicae artis elementa* (1599) of Crappius and the *Modulata Pallas* (1599) of the learned Puteanus.

With the close of the sixteenth century we must cry halt to this description of the treasures among the printed books and music of the *Euing Collection*, although I have not mentioned the innumerable psalm and hymn books of this century, save the Moravian exemplar. Of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth century books and music there is no time to speak of the rare and scarce items, and especially of their fine condition.

Of greater interest are the manuscripts in this collection because these are not included in the printed catalogue. Whilst there are only a few treasures, many others have a particular value from a national point of view, and most have been neglected by bibliographers.

I have already called attention to the original documents in holograph which formed the basis of the old *Dictionary of Music* (London, 1824),⁵ and to the works of William Savage (1720-89),⁶ which are in this collection. "If only life and leisure lasts", as old Boethius once said, I hope to cull further from this source. Meantime, a brief description of some of the Euing manuscripts may tempt others to delve.

The most interesting item in the collection is a holograph of Robert Ramsey (sixteenth-seventeenth century). In this we have four pieces for six voices, and each is signed by the composer. They are: *Long agoe, my hart I gave; Sleep fleshlye birth, in peacefull earth; In monte olivete; and O vos omnes, qui transitis per viam*. There is so little of Ramsey's work extant that these delightful pieces deserve to be known.⁷

Of more general appeal is a work by John Playford (1623-93). This consists of four part-books for *cantus primus*, *cantus secundus*, *bassus*, and *basso continuo*, each bearing on the cover the initials I. P. These books appear to have been the actual parts used by Playford's "musick-society", and may have been the originals from which the *Catch as Catch Can or the Musical Companion* (1667) was printed. In these manuscript part-books the Society is called "our Musically Clubb", and the list of members contains an additional name, that of "Jeremy Saville, Gent.", to what is given in the *Musical Companion*. A fly-leaf of one of the books contains the following note: "Dec. 30, 1674. Note that I, James Clifford, bought this sett of Musick Books of Mr. Rich. Price's widow, Mrs. Dorothy Price, for 7s. 6d."⁸

John Wall Callcott (1766-1821) is well represented by holographs. One volume contains 12 of his early works, written when 19 years of age. These are:—*Sappho to Phaon*, voc. and pf. (26th Jan., 1785); *Bred on plains*, voc. and

⁵ *Music and Letters*, XII (1931), XX (1939).

⁶ *Ibid.*, XVII (1936).

⁷ Grove's *Dictionary of Music*, IV, 323, copying Davey's *History of English Music* (1895), p. 234, suggests that the Glasgow holograph contains "anthems and services" which it does not.

⁸ The initials, I. P. on the covers, might be those of one of the Price family. On the other hand they might be those of Playford himself. Indeed, the work might be an autograph. If so, what was the Price family doing with these part-books in 1678 when Playford did not die until 1693?

orch. (29th Apr. 1785); *Why o'er the verdant banks*, for Miss Clarissa Madden (18th May, 1785); *Sonata*, pf. (9th May, 1785); *For rural virtues*, for 4 voc. (24th May, 1785); *As now the fragrant hours*, for Mr. Madden of Fulham (24th May, 1785); *Ah Dämon said*, voc. and pf. (2nd Sept., 1785); *Ye fairy bowers*, for Miss Harriet Madden (13th Sept., 1786); *O qui me gelidis in vallibus aemi sistat*, 3 voc. (28th Sept., 1786); *Yes Henry I will go*, voc. and pf. (20th Nov., 1785); *The incantation*, voc. and orch. (17th Dec., 1784); *The turn blest days*, for Miss Madden (21st Dec., 1785). Another holograph is the song *In life's gay scenes* (25th Jan., 1818). This has a pathetic interest since it was composed during the period when it was thought that Callcott's mental health had been restored after a blank of five years. Two other compositions of his in this collection are *Hail Champion Albion* (26th Oct., 1789) and *These as they change Almighty Father*. The latter bears the superscription "Mr. [William] Hawes, 1825", and I believe that the copying is in Hawes' handwriting.

The compositions of that delightful glee writer Samuel Webbe (1740-1816) also abound. These are:—*Clasped in her faithful shepherd's guardian arms*, 4 voc. (Oct., 1788); *Love and friendship*, composed for the family of Mrs. Casamajor, Potherells, Herts (5th Sept., 1800); *Since beauty scarce endures*, 5 voc. (1801); *The parent bird in plaintive mood*, 3 voc. (July, 1803); *How sweetly*, 4 voc. (21st Mar., 1808); *My heart ador'd*, for his dear friend Willm. Dance (Sept., 1810); *Meek solitude*, 4 voc.; *This 'tis to live*, 4 voc.; *O place me*, 5 voc.

Lord Burghersh (1784-1859), the actual founder of the [Royal] Academy of Music (1822), has the following standing to his credit in this collection, much of it being holograph. *Chant we the requiem*, 4 voc.; *Se l'idol che adoro*, voc. and pf.; *Sinfonia in D*, orch.; *Del pari in seconda*, voc. and pf.; *Come pray with me*, voc. and orch.; *Pietosa al mio martire*, voc. and pf.; *Già la luna dal monte s'estolle*, voc. and pf.; *Se un cuore annodi*, 3. voc. and pf.; *Grazie ti rendo*, 3 voc. and pf.; *Oh but to see that head recline*, voc. and pf.; *Ah rammenta o' bella Irene*, voc. and pf. (two versions); *Tiranno amor*, 3 voc. and pf.; *When I crosst the ocean* (Antonio Foscari), voc. and pf.; *Colpita da fulmine* (Fedra, 1828), 3 voc. and orch.; *Qual forza han sul mio core* (Autona e Proserpina), voc. and orch.; *Per voi m'alletta il fonte*, voc. and orch.; *Di questo dolce istante*, voc. and orch.; *Sciolga pietoso amore*, voc. and orch.; *Se non ti moro allato*, voc. and orch.; *Ridiamo cantiamo*, voc. and orch.; and many other compositions.

Sir Henry Bishop (1786-1855) is represented by full scores, in holograph, of the operas *Maid of the Mill* (1814), *Telemachus* (1815) and *Comus* (1815). Samuel Wesley (1766-1837) is to be found in two holographs, *Dixit Dominus Domino*, 3 voc. (25th Dec., 1806) and *While ev'ry short-liv'd flow'r of sense*. There are also holographs of Reginald Spofforth (1770-1827) and M. P. King (1773-1823), the former being displayed in *Fragrant the grove*, in score, and the latter in *Parting is such sweet sorrow*, *The Jessamine Bower* and *The Blush on the Cheek*.

William Crotch (1775-1847) appears in a glee, *Sweet sylvan scenes*, for 4 voc. composed "on leaving Heathfield Park (Sept., 1807)", and arranged for 5 voc. (Feb., 1808), and another, *Death thou wert once a hideous sight* (1828). James Nares (1717-83) has a glee for 3 voc. and a "cannon 3 in one". John L.

Ellerton (1801-73) finds a place with *How the hungry lion roars*, in score, and *We Fairies that do run*. None of those mentioned in this paragraph is an autograph.

The Euing Collection also contains a number of manuscripts of a didactic nature. Among them are a *Grammar for Th[orough] Bass* by the Hon. and Rev. Edward Finch (1664-1738), and a *Te Deum* (1708) and a *Jubilate* (1721) of his. They are in a nicely tooled volume which also includes a theoretical work by Godfrey Keller (fl. 1707) entitled *Examples of the Maner of Taking all sorts of Discords*. A century later we have the *Lezioni di Contrapunto* (1816) of Bonaventura Furlanetto (1738-1817) which deserves notice since it is unpublished like most of his compositions. An outstanding item is a volume of lute music in tablature which has escaped the notice of bibliographers. The binding reveals that it dates from the time of James I (d. 1625). It deserves the attention of historians of the lute. Then there is a *Scuola del leutino o sia Mandolino alla genovese* with a coloured frontispiece of the instrument, which would seem to date from the seventeenth century. A manuscript of the *Geschichte der europäisch-abendländischen oder unserer heutigen Musik* of R. G. Kieseewetter (1773-1850), a work which had considerable vogue in its day, may be the author's autograph.

Of John Stafford Smith (1750-1836) we read in Grove's *Dictionary of Music* that a vast "quantity of music" offered for sale after the composer's death was, for the greater part, "altogether lost". In the *Euing Collection* there is a considerable quantity of music and papers which might very well be some of this "lost" music. Among the papers are a music notebook and an amusing common-place book. The latter, as was usual in those days, contains all and sundry, and sandwiched between some musical jottings is "a never-failing cure for a clap" which it is to be hoped was not a common-place.

A volume of *Duetti e terzetti a diverse voci* by Giovanni C. M. Clari (1699-c. 1745) has an additional interest. It once belonged to Charles Wesley (1757-1834) and bears his autograph. Later it passed into the possession of Joseph Warren (1804-1881) who seems to have acquired much of Wesley's library, since he adds a note saying that he possessed several compositions of Charles and Samuel Wesley, some "ten or twelve anthems for 4, 5, 6, and 8 voices, with instrumental accompaniments, a second set of concertos for the organ in score, . . . an elegy, cantatas, operas, songs, etc., all of which have never been printed". What could have become of these manuscripts?

Although I have only featured the compositions of British composers which are to be found in the *Euing Collection*, there are a number of works by German and Italian writers which deserve scrutiny. Manuscripts of Palestrina, Pergolesi, Hasse, and others abound here as elsewhere, but, seemingly, they have all been printed. Among the rarer items are: a *Stabat Mater* for 2 voc. and strings by Matteo Asola (d. 1609), a full score of *Artaserse* by Leonardo Vinci (1690-1730), a *Stabat Mater* for 4 voc. by Emanuele Astorga (1681-1736), a full score of *Il desir consolato* by Johann Gottlieb Naumann (1741-1801), a cantata *Der Sieg des Erlösers* by Ernst Wilhelm Wolf (1735-92), a fugue *Amen secula seculorum* for 4 voc. by Stanislaw Mattei (1750-1825), a motet *Erstanden*

ist der Herre Christ (1788) by Johann Knöfel, a cantata *Il sogno* for 3 voc. by Vincenzo Martin y Solar (1754-1810), and a motet *Desiderata nobis* for 3 voc. by Amadeo Bellmonte.

In conclusion, may I call attention to the innumerable bundles of scraps of music, of programmes of music performed in Scotland during the first half of the nineteenth century, all of which deserve scrutiny. Odds and ends of all sorts are to be found in this collection, old parchment service books, collectananea of musical information in scrap books, e.g. *Musical Curiosities* by Joseph Taylor, which is a scrap-book with many valuable illustrations. Since the first issue of Byrd's *Gradualia*, ac *Cantiones Sacrae* (1505) does not seem to be available, it may be of interest to know that the *Euing Collection* has a manuscript copy of this first edition made by M[armaduke] Overend, dated 1774. Indeed, not until we have a complete catalogue of the *Euing Collection* can musicographers know its contents.

Book Reviews

PH—PH—PH—PH—PHIL

Royal Philharmonic, the Annals of the Royal Philharmonic Society. By Robert Elkin. Pp. 192. (Rider.) 1947. 21s.

"He emerged from the ordeal with flying colours". This, from Mr. Elkin's description of a concert conducted by Landon Ronald is an apt summary of the work containing it. I wish I could leave matters there, and with the caveat that just such a work might have been expected as a follow-on to *Queen's Hall*, 1893-1941. But I suppose I must be more specific. If you glance at the jacket, *and like it*, you may be sure that you are not buying a pig in a poke. I have never, no never, seen the heads and shoulders of (left to right, top) Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn, Wagner (with Master's cap), Beethoven, and (bottom) Grieg and Elgar, made more in the mould of seedy provincial tradesmen, if not rather murderers, than around this graven titular shield draped with a red curtain on which a Tussaud crown reposes; the ground, naturally, being purple. It is the exact counterpart of Francesco Berger's English prose: "gratifying to know that you have now won, and won easily, the 'blue ribbon' of musical England, by having achieved a *complete triumph* at the Philharmonic". It is not Mr. Elkin's fault. *These are the facts*; and we who read can see how wisely, though the wisdom savoured of sharp practice, Beethoven was to take the money, and not to come. Even the perfect-mannered Mendelssohn, who deceived the English by his suavity, let out the truth to Devrient: "were I to tell them my opinion of their music they would think me rude, and were I to speak to them of music generally, they would think me quite mad. So I do not trouble them with my notions", etc. It is like reading the history of some miserable *family business*, tightly and airlessly conducted by solid unimaginative brains that allow no comment from without. Understand, I am not criticizing the book, only registering my impressions of the stuffiest atmosphere I have known since the pre-1914 Chamber of Horrors. It would be funny (as indeed the passage of arms with Debussy in 1906 is) if it were not so eternal and so incorrigible. Once again, it is *not* Mr. Elkin's fault; he has been an honest biographer of the institution that, from a distance, so generously soothed Beethoven's last hours. Only a Whistler could have enlivened such a recital. Casals does his best with a foreword. All profits from the book will be "donated" to the Royal Philharmonic Society. "Donated" is the right word; it suits the jacket.

E. H. W. M.

Concerning "Theoreticians" and Others

BY

LL. S. LLOYD

"We must distinguish carefully between composers and theoreticians (*musikalischen Theoretikern*)."—HERMANN VON HELMHOLTZ, *Sensations of Tone*.

THE fabrication of a *a priori* theory about music out of his own head, just by thinking about it, has an irresistible fascination for the "theoretician". I say "has" rather than "had", for while it is true that such a *a priori* theory reached its heyday in this country in the nineteenth century when, in Sir Donald Tovey's words, "Rameau's doctrine raged unchecked by taste or common sense, and culminated in Dr. Day's famous application of homoeopathy to the art of music",¹ there has been a curious recrudescence of theory of this kind in recent years in some of the writings about twelve-note music. It is often camouflaged to hide its resemblances to theories which are now discredited on musical grounds. But it is essentially the same pseudo-scientific musing as it was in the nineteenth century. It is worth while giving a little thought to that statement, for we are only too apt to think that because we have done with Dr. Day nowadays, we have got rid of all traces of a weak spot in the history of human thought about nature which was exhibited by those pseudo-scientific musical theories. We have not. We are just as liable as our predecessors were to make the same kind of mistakes, though without their excuse. For it is not only, or even mainly, by the study of science that we avoid these errors: it is far more important to study sixteenth-century polyphony, which was a sealed book to the nineteenth-century "theoretician". The best introduction to Helmholtz is Palestrina. Elsewhere in the pages of this journal² I have not hesitated to claim that Tovey attained to the scientific mentality. I could equally point to an accredited scientist who, in discussing musical "theory", showed himself surprisingly insensitive to the difference between scientific thought and pseudo-scientific speculation. Musicians who know little science may perhaps find these to be reassuring observations.

For those who wish to know how the musician may detect pseudo-science there is no better way of sensing the mental atmosphere in which the nineteenth-century "theoretician" lived than by reading the early volumes of the *Proceedings of the Musical Association*. True, that after reading one or two volumes one finds their pseudo-science rather boring and begins to skip the pages looking for the bright spots. One of the brightest of such bright spots is found in the very first volume,³ in the discussion of a paper by Charles

¹ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, XIVth ed., Article "Harmony". Characteristically, Tovey assumes that we share his knowledge that Dr. Day was a homoeopathic doctor.

² *THE MUSIC REVIEW*, Nov., 1944, V, No. 4, p. 263.

³ *Proc. Mus. Ass.*, 1874-75, p. 70.

Stephens "On the Fallacies of Dr. Day's Theory of Harmony", the purpose of which had been to substitute, for those fallacies, new fallacies of Stephens' own invention. William Pole, D.Mus., F.R.S., speaking from the Chair as an "unbeliever", made some sound and scholarly observations which are well worth study to-day. Pole, 1814-1900, whom we remember for his treatise *The Philosophy of Music*, was a remarkable man. Eminent in his profession of civil engineer, he held the Chair in that subject at University College, London, from 1859 to 1876. A keen student of music from his early years, he graduated at Oxford, while holding that Chair, as B.Mus. in 1860 (at the age of 46) and as D.Mus. in 1867. And although his *Philosophy of Music* is not inerrant, and naturally dates to-day in its scientific detail, the more scientific parts of it are still worth reading; and in it Pole made one of the most penetrating criticisms of Day's theories on record. It may be remembered that Day discovered that the diatonic seventh on the supertonic was really a dominant eleventh with the root and third missing. Pole, in effect, made the pertinent inquiry: why stop at the third? why not omit the fifth also, and so exhibit the common chord on the subdominant as being, in fact, a dominant discord?⁴ which is a more direct, if less witty, comment than the one Tovey himself offered on the chord built up from the notes of the so-called whole-tone scale.⁵ For judging of the fallacies of "theoreticians" there is no sounder maxim than Helmholtz's: that a theory which proves too much stands condemned.

The most pungent criticism, however, of the then-current pseudo-scientific theories about music is to be found in Volume X of the *Proceedings of the Musical Association*, 1883-84, in a long paper, read in two parts, by Gerard F. Cobb. This well repays reading. Cobb had not at his service all we know to-day about the discrepancies between the tones we hear and the vibrations which excite them as the responses of our hearing faculty. He did not know that pitch is not determined solely by the frequency of a vibration, not being wholly independent of its intensity, for that had still to be discovered by Burton.⁶ Nor did he know, as we know to-day, that from two perfectly simple vibrations, such as we hear as pure tones when they have little intensity, our hearing faculty produces a whole series of subjective overtones and combination tones when the intensity is raised to 80 or 90 decibels.⁷ His attack on the notion that there is a physical basis for music could have been directed by this knowledge, but it could not have been more devastating. And if he wanted to attack, as he did, a *physical* misconception (which he perhaps shared) of Helmholtz's theory of dissonance he could to-day have referred to modern investigations, such as Harvey Fletcher's,⁸ to remind his audience that this work, like our present knowledge of masking, and what we know of our power of attending to the important, and ignoring the unimportant, part of our sensations, all serve to justify Helmholtz's insistence that partial tones belong

⁴ *Philosophy of Music*, 4th ed., p. 247.

⁵ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, XIVth ed., Article "Harmony".

⁶ C. V. Burton, *Phil. Mag.*, 1895, xxxix, 447.

⁷ R. L. Wegel and C. E. Lane, *Phys. Rev.*, 1924, XXIII, 266-285.

⁸ *Rev. mod. Phys.*, 1940, XII, 47, "Auditory Patterns".

to pure auditory sensation and are not primarily physics. He might add that to this day, there is constant confusion, fully exploited by the modern "theoretician", between *dissonance*, which has a physiological meaning, and *discord*, which belongs to the art of music. The major 6/4, which for centuries was treated by composers as a discord, is the most consonant of the 5/3, 6/3, 6/4 triads, while the dissonant 6/3 on the supertonic was a concord.

The most amusing thing about this paper, however, is the subsequent discussion. Cobb was not lacking in courage and he proved himself no respecter of persons. Indeed the more eminent the "theoretician" the more certain he was of castigation. It is not surprising, therefore, to read of the flutter this paper produced in the dovescots. Macfarren was, for the moment, knocked clean off his perch. Stephens was so disturbed that he invoked divine authority for his theories:

"I perfectly agree with Sir George Macfarren that there must be law and order in these things, and we only follow the dictates of God himself, I may urge, when we say let there be order in what we do."

Now in what essential does this indignation of Stephens' differ from the indignation of high powers of the mediaeval Church, who burnt Bruno at the stake in 1600 for daring to think for himself when that thinking led him to call in question the traditional belief in authority? We are getting very near the bone here. For it was precisely here that the struggle of the seventeenth century became a conflict between the scientific method and the decree of the authoritarian. As the late Dr. Topley said in his Linacre lecture of 1940:⁹

"Science has tried and condemned authority, and in its grosser forms authority is dead. Where it still lives in the field of medicine it might, I think, be defined as the didactic assertion of inadequately tested working hypotheses, accompanied by an unwillingness to meet the challenge of a critic by performing a more adequate series of tests."

If for "medicine" we read "musical theory" the passage is just as apposite. Is it not common experience that one of the characteristics of the "theoretician" is this: that, in his anxiety to prove himself right he always ignores any evidence that tends to prove him wrong? And Tovey has reminded us that the first duty of the man of science towards his own theories is to try to disprove them.¹⁰ Thus James Higgs is recorded in Vol. I of the *Proceedings of the Musical Association* (p. 69) as "venturing to believe that composers have always had fixed-tone instruments in their minds and that they have always written in equal temperament." Like so many "theoreticians" he just ignored the three-centuries reign of mean-tone tuning, which was not finally replaced by equal temperament in this country till well into the nineteenth century. He explicitly brushed aside, as going beyond his own experience, the assertion that string-players use a more flexible scale.

In a paper I read to the Musical Association in 1944¹¹ I advanced scientific arguments which suggested that the mental process of the "theoretician" is

⁹ Cambridge University Press.

¹⁰ *The Integrity of Music*, p. 8.

¹¹ *Proc. Mus. Assoc.*, 1943-44, LXX, p. 35.

essentially a relapse into mediaeval speculation. That seems to me the correct diagnosis of any train of thought which leads men to suppose that the development of the art of music is due to something inevitable and outside the ambit of the human mind, whether that something is a physical basis of music, the "arithmetical mysticism" of the nineteenth-century "theoretician" as Helmholtz called it, or the notion of organic evolution of tone-material with which Mr. George Perle opened his article on "The Evolution of the Tone-Row".¹² The permitted length of my Musical Association paper made necessary much compression; and many who on a first reading found the scientific argument difficult to follow may at once recognise the historical analogy between Stephens' attitude to Gerard F. Cobb, and the attitude of the mediaeval Church to Bruno. They may also then discover that pseudo-science, being the negation of the true scientific method, has much in common with the thought of the middle ages, and that this is just as true of the twentieth-century "theoretician", whose appearance on the scene is a new and disquieting phenomenon, as it was of Day, Macfarren, Prout, Stephens and company.

The train of thought we have been following found expression in a paper "On Dr. Day's System of Harmony" which Dr. Pearce read to the Musical Association in 1888. It contains this suggestive observation:

"The great truth which Day teaches us, as distinct from all other theorists of his time, is that *modern tonality is threefold*. The tonic key is the centre of the tonal system, having as its accessories certain characteristic features of the dominant key on one side and the subdominant key on the other side. Day lived in the nineteenth century, the age of science, and accordingly tried to derive his tonality from natural phenomena; had he been a pious monk, or ecclesiastic of the middle ages, he might, perhaps, have discovered in the same system of threefold tonality a really beautiful emblem of the Ever-Blessed and undivided Trinity."

The "theoretician" and the mediaeval monk both lose themselves in the same kind of romantic musing, but the expression of their thoughts is that natural to their respective circumstances.

Anyone reading the early *Proceedings of the Musical Association* will quickly learn to draw a distinction between the real men of science, such as William Pole and Blaikley, and those who constantly took part in the discussion of what they fondly called the science of music, but with whom this so-called science was the pseudo-science of a *priori* theory. It is easy, but not enough, to debunk the nineteenth-century "theoreticians". To expose the fallacies of their more wary twentieth-century successors we must follow Dr. Pearce and dig deeper—into their mental processes.

Boswell records Dr. Johnson as laying down a new scheme of life for himself which would comprise closer attention to its religious duties. The sixth of these was: "to read books of divinity, either speculative or practical". The older writers, such as Thomas Morley,¹³ used "speculative" where we should use the word "theoretical". But for those rarified regions of thought in which

¹² THE MUSIC REVIEW, Nov., 1941, II, No. 4, p. 273.

¹³ THE MUSIC REVIEW, May, 1942, III, No. 2, p. 92.

"theoreticians" move, the older term is the more truly descriptive. Did not Tovey warn us?

"Musical theory has been wrecked again and again by efforts to base it upon natural acoustic principles. The attempt is vain, as are all attempts to reduce art to science. In as far as theories of harmony go beyond empiric observation of the practice of great masters, they tend towards uncontrollable pseudo-scientific speculations."¹⁴

The casuistry of mediaeval habits of thought about nature, which have their reincarnation in the pseudo-scientific speculations of modern "theoreticians", does not suffice, however, to explain *why* speculation of this kind in *a priori* theory has such a fascination for them. It is evident that in the clichés of nineteenth-century "theory" they find plausible evidence, sufficient to impress the uncritical reader, that they know what they are talking about. Thus Dr. Day can still be trotted out disguised as "the natural phenomenon of the harmonic series". That phrase sounds knowledgeable but, scientifically, it does not mean what the "theoretician" supposes it to mean. A phenomenon is the product of perception, and "the natural phenomenon of the harmonic series" is what aural perception tells us about a series of component vibrations whose periods form a harmonic series, vibrations corresponding to what we commonly call a fundamental and its overtones, but would do better to call partial tones. In other words, this pretentious phrase means nothing more than—a musical tone. As used by the "theoretician", to-day, it is an inexcusable triumph of muddled thinking. Consider its antitheses. An example of "an unnatural phenomenon of the harmonic series" would be some freak of his hearing faculty which enabled a "theoretician" to hear individually all the harmonic series of vibrations, including non-existent ones, which he postulates for his theory. It would be the modern equivalent of Pythagoras' power, postulated by his disciples, to hear the music of the spheres as the planets moved on their courses. The "natural phenomenon of an inharmonic series" may be illustrated by the jangle we perceive in listening to an untuned bell or a dinner gong beaten vigorously.

Something more than the attractions of such verbal camouflage is needed to explain the fascination of *a priori* theory, and I think the only adequate explanation is that to follow the supposed argument of *a priori* theory demands so little thought, while to invent it is—how shall I put it?—such fun, though the "theoretician" would probably call it intellectual satisfaction. In the last part of this paper we will explore this suggestion by inventing *a priori* the musical scale of the future. But it is to be feared that we shall not succeed in producing anything so brief or so witty as a theory which Gerard F. Cobb invented in his Musical Association paper. Colin Brown,¹⁵ in particular, had been the advocate of a theory which discovered the notes of the diatonic scale, beginning with middle C, in the harmonics numbered 24, 27, 30, 32, 36, 40, 45, and 48, of a note more than an octave below the limits of audibility.¹⁶ For

¹⁴ *The Integrity of Music*, p. 45.

¹⁵ Euing Lecturer, 1869-1885, Anderson's College, Glasgow.

¹⁶ Donkin, in his *Acoustics*, 1870, gave this as an example of the construction of an "artificial scale".

the Highest Common Factor of these numbers, and therefore their "index" as Euler called it,¹⁷ is 1. Now why choose these particular harmonics? asked Cobb, in effect. Why prefer them to 25 and 26; 28 and 29; 31; 33, 34, and 35; and so on? Cobb offered an analogy to this arbitrary process. Following the practice of all the best "theoreticians", he suggested that the reason why London is called London might be discovered by considering the fifty-odd towns that lie between it and Newcastle. He found that the twenty-fourth, twenty-seventh, thirty-second, thirty-sixth, fortieth, and forty-fifth, were Luton, Oakham, Newark, Doncaster, Ouseburn, and Northallerton. One can almost hear some of his audience bursting with indignation.

We were all indebted to the distinguished physicist, Dr. Balth. van der Pol, for permitting the reproduction, in the issue of *THE MUSIC REVIEW* for February, 1946, of a translation of a paper he read in 1942 at Teyler's Institute, Haarlem. The results of his experiments on his own sense of absolute pitch are a useful contribution to our knowledge of this subject. None who possess this not very common power of pitch discrimination are in any doubt that one either possesses it or one does not. There is no half-way house, though, as Bachem's work¹⁸ shows, those of us who do not possess it often manage to develop either a quasi- or a pseudo-absolute sense of pitch. How far some nineteenth-century "theoreticians" may have been misled by knowledge of the existence, but not of the detailed properties, of these powers (Stephens, for one, possessed genuine absolute pitch) is an interesting speculation, but a fruitless one because we are unable to make any experimental investigation of their individual hearing faculties. Investigation to discover whether there is any correlation between a genuine sense of absolute pitch, or lack of it, and the readiness of the musician's ear to accept or resent equal temperament, may become possible as we learn more about aural perception.

Dr. van der Pol's experiments with subharmonics, produced by what he calls relaxation oscillations, are really of more far-reaching interest to some of us than the limited space allowed them may have suggested. Incidentally this study of non-linear vibrations affords an experimental demonstration of the effect of the vibrations of the ear-drum which Helmholtz used to explain subjective combination tones, and this study may be destined to extend our knowledge of our hearing faculty. The idea of subjective combination tones due to lack of symmetry in the ear-drum, and its vibrations, was perplexing to some of the nineteenth-century "theoreticians" with little knowledge of mathematics.

Of particular interest, and a novelty to many of us, was the Farey series expounded by Dr. van der Pol. It arouses just one anxious thought: that perhaps some "theoretician" may find its attractions so irresistible that he will use it to invent a new theory of tonality and a new scale for the future. To be on the safe side let us forestall him and invent one of our own. (But we must be quite clear that this is not at all what Dr. van der Pol did: he called

¹⁷ *THE MUSIC REVIEW*, Feb., 1946, VII, No. 1, p. 13.

¹⁸ *J. Acoust. Soc. Amer.*, Apr., 1940, Vol. XI, No. 4, p. 434.

attention only to the interesting coincidences between the fractions in the series F (5) and the ratios of the intervals of tonic consonances in our existing scale played perfectly in tune, and between the series F (n) and the intervals between successive harmonics and subharmonics. He was lecturing to a mixed audience of musicians and scientists, and these coincidences would be a natural justification for inviting attention to a series which really belongs to the theory of numbers and was of more particular interest to the scientists.) Let us, then, write down four simple equations and see what we can discover from them about musical scales:

$$\begin{aligned} 5 + 2 &= 7 \\ 7 + 5 &= 12 \\ 9 + 8 &= 17 \\ 11 + 11 &= 22 \end{aligned}$$

The distinguishing characteristic of the figures in the three columns is that in each column they form an arithmetical progression. In the first column the numbers increase by differences of 2, in the second by differences of 3, and consequently in the third by differences of 5.

The first equation is easy. It is an expression for the pentatonic scale with five regular and two auxiliary degree notes.

The second, too, is easy. It sets out the modal scale-system of the early sixteenth century, when strict practice limited the available sharps and flats to B \flat , E \flat , F \sharp , C \sharp and G \sharp . We must not suppose that our equations show that the modal scale of the sixteenth century was derived from the pentatonic. Its ancestry is found in the *harmoniai* of Greek music, on which Miss Schlesinger has thrown much-needed light.¹⁹ (All the best "theoreticians" are careful about little points like this, nor would they forget that recent research²⁰ has shown the hexatonic scale to be a strong characteristic of Western Europe.)

The third equation stands for the scale-system of the classical period, using all sharps and flats. But someone unversed in the resource of the "theoretician" may say: "surely that would need ten sharps and flats and therefore ten auxiliary degrees, and not more than seven diatonic notes and therefore only seven regular degrees". No competent "theoretician" would be defeated by a little thing like that. He would at once object: "But why assume that no sharp or flat could become a regular degree of the major scale of C? What about the Neapolitan sixth and other chromatic harmony which add A \flat , and the chromatic seventh on the supertonic which adds F \sharp , to the scale-system? These", he would continue, "are now both regular degrees".

The fourth equation clearly provides us with the scale of the future: with eleven regular degrees and eleven auxiliary ones. What then are the notes of the new diatonic scale, represented by the eleven regular degrees? Why, of course, they are the eleven notes which are found in the first octave, reading

¹⁹ In *The Greek Aulos* (Methuen).

²⁰ *Nature*, 18th Jan., 1941, Vol. 147, No. 3716, p. 90.

upwards from the middle note, of the Farey series which Dr. van der Pol tells us is denoted F (8). A series thus numbered is clearly one which will determine the regular notes to be inserted in an *octave*, and it gives us eleven notes having ratios with the tonic as follows:

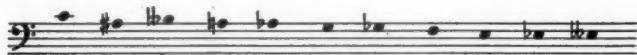
$$\frac{1}{1}, \frac{8}{7}, \frac{7}{6}, \frac{6}{5}, \frac{5}{4}, \frac{4}{3}, \frac{7}{5}, \frac{3}{2}, \frac{8}{5}, \frac{5}{3}, \frac{7}{4}$$

As nearly as possible these notes are represented, in their correct order, on the stave as follows:



A charming scale, not the least of its charms being the delightful irregularity of its intervals! And consider the melodic resource available between C and E: three notes close together to choose from;²¹ the first, as depicted on the stave, nearly a comma (*i.e.* a diaschisma) above the now non-existent D natural; and then two notes, the first a diatonic semitone below E, and the next a diesis higher, being a diatonic semitone above the non-existent D. Observe too that A \flat and F \sharp which were added in the previous scale, as making nine regular degrees in all, reappear here. A melodic scale like this is surely intended for the *linear* music which is the vogue to-day in some quarters, and it is destined to replace the twelve-note scale to which that music is limited at present.

And to find the minor scale, read the same Farey series downwards from the same starting point, as Dr. van der Pol did for F (5). This will eliminate D \sharp and F \sharp and add two new notes which we may call G \flat and B $\flat\flat$, ratios 10/7 and 12/7 above the tonic. As nearly as possible this minor scale is represented on the stave as follows:



How about the auxiliary degree notes? We have to find eleven of them. For the major scale two auxiliary degrees, G \flat and B $\flat\flat$, have already been provided by the minor scale. For the remainder of the eleven notes we must obviously go to the Farey series F (11); and we find that this adds nine more auxiliary degree notes. In fact, it would add ten more were it not that the minor scale has already added one of them, the note with the ratio 10/7 above the tonic (G \flat). Thus our complete major scale of 22 notes is determined by

²¹ More correctly the second and third notes of our new scale are respectively 4 elevenths of a comma above E $\flat\flat$ and 4 elevenths of a comma below D \sharp . The interval between them is actually 18 elevenths of a comma, and the next interval is 25 elevenths of a comma. A diesis (such as the interval G \sharp A \flat —the wolf of mean-tone tuning) is 21 elevenths of a comma, *cf.* THE MUSIC REVIEW, Nov., 1944, Vol. V, No. 4, p. 221.

the following series of ratios, each measured upwards from the tonic:

$$\begin{array}{cccccccccccc} \mathbf{1} & \mathbf{11} & \mathbf{10} & \mathbf{9} & \mathbf{8} & \mathbf{7} & \mathbf{6} & \mathbf{11} & \mathbf{5} & \mathbf{9} & \mathbf{4} \\ \mathbf{1'} & \mathbf{10'} & \mathbf{9'} & \mathbf{8'} & \mathbf{7'} & \mathbf{6'} & \mathbf{5'} & \mathbf{9'} & \mathbf{4'} & \mathbf{7'} & \mathbf{3'} \\ \\ \mathbf{11} & \mathbf{7} & \mathbf{10} & \mathbf{3} & \mathbf{11} & \mathbf{8} & \mathbf{5} & \mathbf{12} & \mathbf{7} & \mathbf{9} & \mathbf{11} \\ \mathbf{8'} & \mathbf{5'} & \mathbf{7'} & \mathbf{2'} & \mathbf{7'} & \mathbf{5'} & \mathbf{3'} & \mathbf{7'} & \mathbf{4'} & \mathbf{5'} & \mathbf{6'} \end{array}$$

the regular degree notes being indicated by heavier type.

The ingenious reader can work out for himself, by inversion of this scale,²² the auxiliary degrees of the minor scale. The complete result of this inversion is the minor scale that follows, each note being determined by a ratio measured upwards from the tonic (the auxiliary degrees are indicated by lighter type, and the regular degrees, indicated by heavier type, have already been represented, as nearly as possible, in reverse order, in musical notation on the bass staff):

$$\begin{array}{cccccccccccc} \mathbf{1} & \mathbf{12} & \mathbf{10} & \mathbf{8} & \mathbf{7} & \mathbf{6} & \mathbf{5} & \mathbf{14} & \mathbf{4} & \mathbf{7} & \mathbf{10} \\ \mathbf{1'} & \mathbf{11'} & \mathbf{9'} & \mathbf{7'} & \mathbf{6'} & \mathbf{5'} & \mathbf{4'} & \mathbf{11'} & \mathbf{3'} & \mathbf{5'} & \mathbf{7'} \\ \\ \mathbf{16} & \mathbf{3} & \mathbf{14} & \mathbf{8} & \mathbf{18} & \mathbf{5} & \mathbf{12} & \mathbf{7} & \mathbf{16} & \mathbf{9} & \mathbf{20} \\ \mathbf{11'} & \mathbf{2'} & \mathbf{9'} & \mathbf{5'} & \mathbf{11'} & \mathbf{3'} & \mathbf{7'} & \mathbf{4'} & \mathbf{9'} & \mathbf{5'} & \mathbf{11'} \end{array}$$

It will be observed that just as the regular degrees of the minor scale provided two auxiliary degrees of the major scale, so two regular degrees of the major scale (ratios 7/6 and 7/5, as nearly as possible D# and F#) provide two auxiliary degrees of the minor scale. Thus in each scale nine auxiliary degrees are provided by the Farey series F (11) directly; and it is noteworthy that only two of these auxiliary degrees are common to the two scales (ratios 10/9 and 9/5 above the tonic). The remaining seven in each scale either form pairs of notes which are slightly different (four in each scale) or do not really correspond at all (three in each scale), thus providing a delicate difference of intonation in the auxiliary notes of the major and minor scales; and being by now good "theoreticians" we must ignore the fact that the ear is not very exacting about the intonation of notes which do not form part of the prevailing harmony.

When he has completed these studies, and devised the appropriate musical notation to exhibit the result on the musical staff, the patient reader will have a critical appreciation of what to the student of science are "the absurdities of the *a priori* theorist" (I quote a well-known physicist) and will find it much easier to detect the pseudo-science he will meet in some of the so-called "theory" of twelve-note music.

This is important, for new music must stand or fall by its own musical merits. It will never win acceptance through being explained by misapplied science or pseudo-science. *A priori* theory is no more than a weight chained to its ankle. Even real science can give little or no help. As Dr. van der Pol remarked in a somewhat different context: "In such things as this science must

²² Thus, to invert $\frac{11}{10}$ write $2 \div \frac{11}{10} = 2 \times \frac{10}{11} = \frac{20}{11}$ and to invert $\frac{10}{9}$ write $2 \div \frac{10}{9} = 2 \times \frac{9}{10} = \frac{9}{5}$

keep silent and art alone may speak"; and, as Thomas Morley observed,²² even "speculative musicke" was "content with the onlie contemplation of the Art". True musical theory can never be fabricated, *a priori*, in the manner we have been discussing. It is the product only of musical scholarship. In short, music is made by composers not by "theoreticians", and scales are made in the process of endeavouring to make music.

Here lies the ground of my complaint of twentieth-century "theoreticians" who write as protagonists of twelve-note music. If they knew a little more of scientific history and had any real sense of the true scientific mentality, they would realise that their pseudo-scientific musings can only rouse prejudice, among thoughtful musicians, against a serious attempt of serious composers to enlarge the resource of the art of music.

Book Review

L'Oeuvre de Gabriel Fauré. By Claude Rostand. Pp. 213. (Janin.) 1945.

The purpose of this lucid and perceptive volume is to offer a general introduction to Fauré's music, and inspire the reader to make for himself a detailed study of the composer's works. M. Rostand's book might have attained a special importance in England but for the sheer chance that he has been so fully anticipated by Mr. Norman Suckling, and, of the two authors, Mr. Suckling provides a more substantial treatment of his subject. There is the further point that M. Rostand follows a method of presentation which imposes some handicap upon himself and the reader. Fauré's life and music are discussed according to a plan of fairly strict chronology irrespective of the fact that certain years were infinitely less fruitful than others. The result is that the author finds himself driven into a position from which it is impossible to escape except by an observation of this kind: "L'année suivante, 1878, n'est marquée d'aucune composition d'importance. Fauré écrit cependant le premier mouvement d'un Concerto pour violon et orchestre, opus 14, qui ne verra jamais le jour". Again, M. Rostand declares his intention at the outset of passing in summary review the *whole* of Fauré's output. He does indeed contrive to fulfil the letter of this ambition, but his book is not large, and he has no choice but to deal briefly even with those works entitled to the fullest discussion.

The strength of his pages lies in an extraordinary closeness of sympathy with Fauré's mind, and a power of appreciation which seldom dissolves into unmeasured eulogy. It is startling to read, in a book addressed by a Frenchman to his own countrymen, that Fauré is among the least-known of classical composers. This does nothing to justify our comparative neglect of him in England, but few of us will have supposed that France herself offers us companionship in this shortcoming. No doubt it is for such reasons that, throughout his volume, M. Rostand has constantly to apply himself to matters of which we might have expected Frenchmen to be aware, and which are largely within the existing knowledge of English readers. He finds it necessary to point the absence of assertive qualities in Fauré's art, reminding us of the composer's genius for intimacy combined with hellenic purity of style, and this disinclination to take anything for granted leaves a woeful insufficiency of space even for such a work as the Requiem. The book remains, then, introductory in purpose and achievement, written in a style whose elegance and polish are sheer delight, and reinforced by a complete list of Fauré's compositions.

R. H.

²² THE MUSIC REVIEW, May, 1942, III, No. 2, p. 92.

Concert Hall Acoustics

BY

E. G. RICHARDSON

INTRODUCTION

THE problem of designing an auditorium which shall bring music or dramatic speech satisfactorily to the ears of an audience is one which has intrigued architects, musicians and scientists ever since musical and dramatic art was practised in an enclosure, though these persons have approached the problem from respectively different aspects. At first, approach to the problem was empirical and directed to the theatre rather than to the concert hall, partly because early concerts were, as the full name, "a consort of viols" indicates, in the nature of chamber music and partly because the ordinary listener is less tolerant of indifferent acoustical conditions when the understanding of speech is in question. It is a fact that he may still get a tolerable idea of a musical piece under conditions that would not enable him to get the purport of a speech. This is because the intelligibility of speech depends so much on the consonants coming through clearly whereas the corresponding sounds in music—for example, the scrape of the bow on the string at the attack of a note—are better smothered.

It is well-known that the earliest auditoria of which details have come down to us were constructed by the Ancient Greeks and Romans for the performance of plays. These had a stage, backed by a high wall and facing tiers of seats arranged in semicircles, rising to a height of fifty to one hundred feet, the whole being open to the air above. Even under such conditions approaching "open-air acoustics", trouble was experienced by the actors in making themselves understood, as witness Vitruvius, who—in a treatise on architecture written about the beginning of our era—devotes considerable attention to the requirements for dramatic speech to be heard clearly. The lay-out (Fig. 1) was such

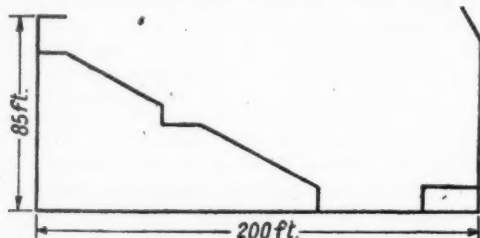


Fig. 1. Elevation of classical open-air theatre.

that reverberation and echoes were not a serious source of indistinct hearing but the main defect of the classical theatre lay in the absence of reinforcement by reflections from well-placed surfaces—excepting the wall behind the stage—such as one should get in a modern hall. Vitruvius himself suggested that this

defect might be remedied by introducing cavities of air which by their resonant response to the actor's voice suitably pitched might reinforce the sound by sympathetic vibration. Similar difficulties were found in early basilica and resolved in the same way by constructing cells in the walls. Relics of such resonators are to be found in the Roman theatre at Orange and in the chancel of a church at Norwich. All these would be what the scientist calls "selective resonators", that is, they would reinforce at limited pitch values and so would have been of no assistance to musical renderings except plainsong and other monotonous speech.

Until the sixteenth century the Church remained the principal source of music performed in public. It was unfortunate that worship became associated with a type of building which though capable of great beauty in the aesthetic sense brought with it not only a "dim religious light" but excessive reverberation, so that seeing and hearing became equally difficult to the congregation. The organ lent itself to the latter condition by being one of the slowest on-and-off speech of all musical instruments, so the tradition became tolerated that every note and syllable in the Church service must be long drawn out. An early print suggests that the need for amplifiers in the form of megaphones was even then found necessary to convey the speaker's voice to distant auditors.

The first concerted music appears in the houses of noblemen in Venice in the sixteenth century. The instruments were mostly viols and if these were played in small music rooms to a select audience conditions approached those which we may get in musical at-homes nowadays. If, however, performances were attempted in the lofty halls of contemporary Italian palaces, it should have become apparent that the precision of the string music was lost. Whether that were so or not, interest in acoustics was reawakened and we find Athanasius Kircher publishing a treatise on it in 1675, though he was more concerned with the vocal than the instrumental aspects of the question. It was not, however, until the beginning of the last century that, with the march of science, serious consideration was given to the design of acoustically good auditoria. The name of Adolphe Sax is not revered by many serious musicians but he was a man with ideas in advance of his time and it is no fault of his that his design for a new wind instrument was put to—musically—base uses a century later while his design for an acoustically good concert hall was never used at all (Fig. 2).

During the nineteenth century the tradition of the Leipzig Gewandhaus as the model for good acoustics took root. There was considerable justification for this and the lessons learnt from this famous concert hall have not been lost upon the architects of to-day. The feature which gave the Gewandhaus its good acoustics was the abundance of wood in the decoration of the interior. On the side-walls wooden panels lent resonance while on the ceiling, broken up as it was by a ramification of massive king-posts and queen-posts, there was a reasonable diffusion of the sound and an absence of prominent echoes in spite of its height. For those who could not design well acoustically either by instinct or by copying a good model, there remained the pseudo-scientific palliative of the wire network. At one time halls of excessive reverberation

had miles of this perfectly useless wire stretched across from side to side at picture-rail level.

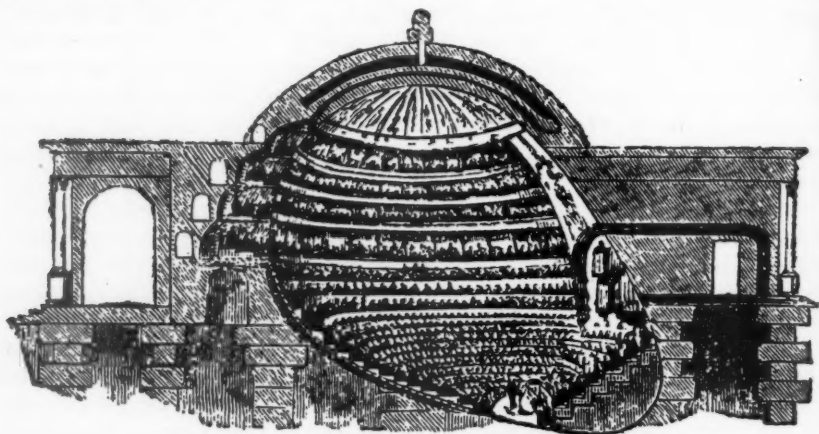


Fig. 2. Design for concert hall by Adolphe Sax (1867).

The American scientist Joseph Henry enunciated in 1856 the fundamental considerations which determine the acoustics of an auditorium. The relevant factors are:—the size of the hall, the strength of the sound, the position of the reflecting surfaces and the nature and material of the reflecting surfaces. The way in which each of these four factors contributes to the auditory effect was investigated in a set of classical experiments by Prof. Wallace Sabine of Harvard, by making gradual changes in one factor at a time while keeping the other three constant. He used an organ pipe blown at constant pressure as source of sound and measured the time that elapsed in the building from the time at which the wind supply was turned off from the pipe until the sound was inaudible. This, which he called the time of reverberation, he found to be proportional to the cubic capacity of the bare hall, while when he introduced absorbing material in the form of cushions in large numbers he found that the time of reverberation was in inverse proportion to the quantity of absorbent, *i.e.* to the number of cushions exposed in the room. By removing the cushions and opening some windows he found what area of cushion was equivalent to a square yard of open window; the latter being supposed a perfect absorber in view of the fact that none of the sound which goes through it returns to reverberate. He then compared other types of furnishings, wall surfaces and even human beings, with the area of open window which they matched acoustically, calling the total equivalent area the "number of absorption units" which the specimen afforded.

REVERBERATION

The formula which Sabine derived empirically from his experiments may be verified scientifically by assuming that at each instant the average intensity

throughout the room may have a unique value given by the symbol E and that this intensity represents a balance between that contributed by any source of supply, *e.g.* the sound emitted by a musical instrument, and that which the room loses by absorption in the walls, furnishings and materials or by transmission to outside. The sound energy falling on the walls per second can be calculated from that which lies in a cylinder of unit cross-section and length moving parallel to itself with velocity c cm. per second (the velocity of sound) and falling on an area of wall equal to $\cos D$ where D is the angle of incidence of this "bundle" of energy on the wall. Thus there falls on the intercept on the wall a quantity $cE \cos D$ of energy every second. Since D may have any value between 0 and 180 degrees, we must take the mean value of $\cos D$ over this range, which is a quarter. So the energy falling on unit area when the sound comes from random directions is $cE/4$.

Next, if a is the average absorption coefficient of the walls, defined as the fraction of the incident energy which is not reflected, and S represents their total effective area, $aS = A$ will be the total number of absorption units, so that $AcE/4$ is the rate at which sound is removed from the room. If at the same time the source supplies energy at a rate Q , we can write the equation:

$$V \frac{dE}{dt} = Q - AcE/4$$

for the balance of energy, V representing the volume of the room. The solution of this, if we reckon that when the time $t = 0$, E also = 0, is:

$$E = \frac{4Q}{aSc} \left(1 - e^{-\frac{aSc}{4V}t} \right)$$

representing a gradual rise exponentially to a steady value—as long as the source keeps sounding—of $\frac{4Q}{aSc} = \frac{4Q}{Ac}$. When the supply is turned off, the average energy in the room decays exponentially according to the formula:

$$E = \frac{4Q}{aSc} e^{-\frac{aSc}{4V}t}$$

The rate at which the average energy (or "loudness") rises and falls in the room when the sound source is turned on and off may be exhibited on a graph (Fig. 3) corresponding to the solutions of the fundamental equation we have just derived.

The importance of the quantity A/V may now be visualised. Not only does it influence the rate of build-up and decay of any sound so that, as Sabine found experimentally, the "time of reverberation" in the sense of the time for the sound energy to decay in a given proportion, depends on it; but also A determines the average loudness to which the sound will build up in the steady state. If we make our concert hall too absorbent, not only will it be dead—the sound will decay too rapidly—but the average loudness will be small, making it difficult for a soloist to make himself heard. At the other extreme of little

absorption, the average energy will be large, it is true, but the reverberation will be so long that it will overlap the next note produced by the player or the next syllable uttered by the speaker and a smudgy rendering will result.

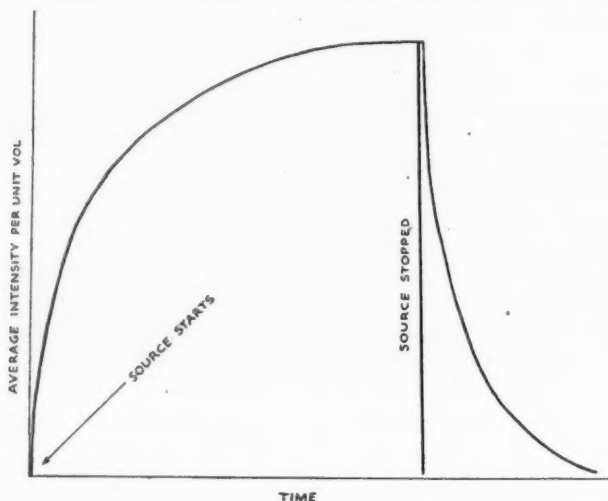


Fig. 3. Rise and decay of sound intensity in a hall.

For reckoning his "time of reverberation", Sabine took a standard source producing an intensity one million times the threshold intensity for the ear at that pitch (equal to 60 decibels on the modern standard of loudness). The corresponding value of t which fits our solution for the decaying sound is then $0.05 \bar{V}/A$, when the foot is taken as the unit of length.

ABSORPTION COEFFICIENTS AND THEIR MEASUREMENT

The table below gives absorption coefficients for some common materials at three frequencies: a pitch corresponding to C in the bass, treble c' and c'''.

Substance	Low pitch	Medium pitch	High pitch
Brick	0.025	0.03	0.06
Concrete	0.01	0.015	0.015
Plaster on brick	0.12	0.02	0.05
Wood	0.05	0.06	0.20
Carpet	0.09	0.21	0.37
Hairfelt (1 in. thick)	0.10	0.50	0.45
Pulp board ($\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick)	0.17	0.20	0.20
Asbestos spray (1 in. thick)	0.60	0.60	—
Plywood, stuffed with wadding	0.70	0.25	0.12
Rock wool (1 in. thick)	0.35	0.60	—

We have mentioned Sabine's rather rough-and-ready method of comparing the effect of a specimen with that of a number of cushions. This method, with precision apparatus, is still used in the following form. In a "reverberation chamber" the time of decay of a standard source is measured first with hard concrete walls and then with the walls lined with the substance under test. The reduction in time is to be ascribed to a certain number of absorption units afforded by the specimen; divide this by the exposed area and you have the absorption coefficient. Other investigators have relied, in principle, on the measurement of the response of a suitable detector to a sound produced in its vicinity with and without a sheet of the material near at hand. This method is not always simple in operation because of reflections produced by neighbouring objects and by the floor or ground. Nothing can therefore be moved between two measurements except the sheet. In an acoustic laboratory in the North of England in which I am interested, a modification of Prof. F. R. Watson's method is used. The laboratory consists of two very thick-walled chambers, adjoining and with a hole about a yard square cut in the common wall. The specimen is placed over this hole and sound of constant pitch directed onto it from a loud-speaker. Detectors, one in the path of the reflected beam and one in the second room to catch any transmitted sound record directly the sound intensity at A and B. (Fig. 4).

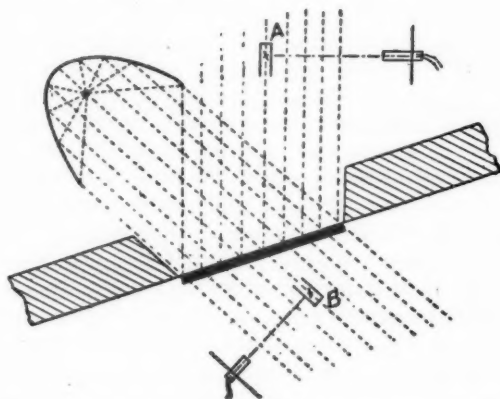


Fig. 4. Measurement of reflection and transmission of sound.

Besides these large-scale methods, which have the disadvantage of taking up a good deal of space and of requiring large panels of the material, small-scale methods are available in which the sound is transmitted along a pipe and reflected by a small specimen of the material. If a hard rigid stopper replaces the specimen, standing waves are set up in which nodes and antinodes can be detected at the appropriate frequency. With the absorbent specimen in place, pseudo-nodes and antinodes are set up and if the acoustic pressure is measured at these points, the proportion of reflected intensity can be calculated.

Fig. 5 shows an apparatus devised by the author for this purpose, in which the

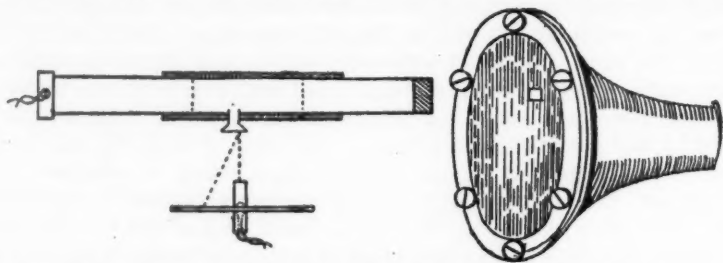


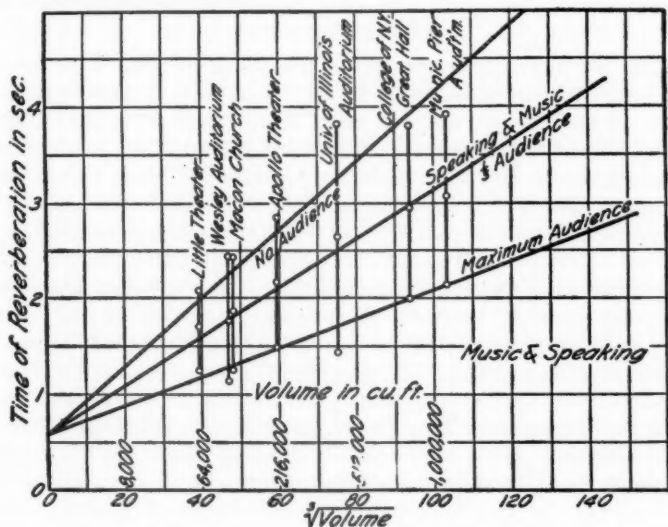
Fig. 5. Measurement of absorption coefficient of specimen to sound.

pressure amplitude in the stationary wave system set up inside the pipe is recorded by a manometric capsule attached to the side. The capsule, shown to a larger scale, is closed by a rubber membrane to which is stuck a tiny mirror which reflects a beam of light from a lamp on to a transparent scale. When the loud-speaker is silent the reflected beam of light is still, but the alternating pressure in the sound-wave causes it to oscillate and makes the spot appear, owing to persistence of vision, to be drawn out into a line whose length is proportional to the amplitude at the point in the pipe where the capsule is inserted. When the material closing the far end of the tube is hard and unyielding—a thick teak stopper may be used for this purpose—and the pitch of the source has been suitably adjusted, standing waves are set up in the pipe with nodes and antinodes each set half a wavelength apart. In true stationary waves the manometer records maxima of pressure amplitude at the nodes and no pressure change at the antinodes. With an imperfect reflector of sound like a porous tile in place of the hard stopper, the nodes show a reduced amplitude while the antinodes now exhibit some pressure movement.

Results for specimens of the same material determined by various methods and in different laboratories do not always precisely agree. Some of these effects may be due to the method of mounting the material; but, if this discrepancy has been guarded against, there remain two major factors in this disharmony, *viz.* (1) differences in size of specimens; (2) differences in location with respect to the incident sound. (These factors are not merely academic for they intervene also when the material is placed in the concert-room.) To get conditions which as far as possible represent the average likely in practice, it is general in acoustic laboratories to use sound distributors which slowly change the pattern of the wave-fronts in the room, so making a gradual change of the angle of incidence, and to have both small and large specimens of the same material exposed.

Armed with information which enabled him to predict the time of reverberation in an auditorium, knowing the size and materials involved, *in advance of its construction*, Sabine turned from the physical to the vocal and musical aspects of the problem. He collected information with regard to halls in the United States which competent musical opinion deemed to have good acoustics and

toured with his organ pipes measuring their respective times of reverberation. These data gave him a relationship between the size of a hall and the optimum time of reverberation. In planning a hall then it is only necessary to adjust the actual time (by varying the décor) to make it agree with the optimum time for its particular volume.



variations allowed for, partially, by supplying seats fairly heavily upholstered to act acoustically in place of the missing seat-holder. (Some acousticians would even discriminate between the sexes in this respect, maintaining that a woman's clothes absorb sound somewhat better than a man's! But this is carrying precision too far!)

TONAL BALANCE

Assuring the correct reverberation is not, of course, the whole desideratum behind concert-hall acoustics, but it is very important and there are other details to consider before we pass on. The most important of these is the variation in the time of reverberation with pitch. Porous materials show smaller variations in this respect than do harder materials which tend to be selective, especially if they are so attached to the walls that they can "drum" under the action of notes of that pitch to which they exhibit resonance. Porous materials on the other hand tend to absorb sounds coming on to them perpendicularly better than those incident obliquely, which is undesirable. Even so, the absorption shown by porous substances such as the clothing of the audience may vary by three times from extreme bass to treble. Usually the absorption rises to a maximum and then falls again going up the musical scale, so that to get uniform absorption over the gamut, some substances having an absorption maximum in the bass and others with the peak in the treble must be introduced. The former can be wood or fibre panels with an air space and the latter fibrous plasters applied to the walls.

It is clear that, on this basis, a different reverberation time will be desirable for different types of music; piano, organ, voice, quartet or orchestra. To a certain extent such differences may be assured by hanging textiles which may be fully exposed or more or less rolled-up.

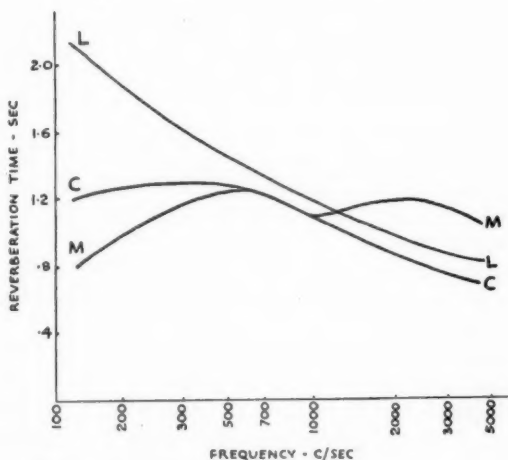
Information is available from the published researches of broadcasting companies' engineers on the ideal tonal balance in concert halls and how to attain it. In particular, Messrs. Kirke and Howe of the B.B.C. have measured the times of reverberation of a number of studios used for orchestral music over the range of frequency 120 to 4,000 vibrations per second. The early concert rooms for broadcasting were brick buildings temporarily rigged up with curtains and carpets. As these tended to absorb too much in the treble (*cf.* the above table), such rooms gave undue prominence to the bass in musical performance. The attachment of building boards made of pulp to the walls restored the balance to a certain extent, though there were still complaints of "bass blasting". For the design of the first music studios in Broadcasting House, a certain quantity of felt, covered with wall-paper, was added to the walls, as this had been found to have a nearly uniform absorption coefficient of 0.35 over the above pitch range. To get the optimum average coefficient of 0.2, it was obvious that some harder materials would have to be introduced and this was secured by introducing the appropriate quantity of building board, the two materials being distributed throughout the auditorium according to principles enunciated in the next section.

There are also certain studios constructed with very absorbent confines so

as to be as dead as possible, the desired amount of reverberation being added synthetically in the broadcast under control of the producer. Such dead rooms are not of much use for music in general but could be used with effect, I should imagine, at brass band contests where "open-air listening conditions" have to be reproduced indoors during inclement weather. Mineral wool and asbestos spray are suitable for this purpose, a four-inch thickness of either absorbing about eighty per cent. of the sound which falls upon it all over the musical gamut.

Of course, resonance in the structure will vitiate the attainment of an ideal reverberation/frequency characteristic in a hall as it is selective to pitch and will give to a composition a colouring which the composer never intended. It is no use making a careful choice of materials to this end if the result is to be spoilt by such selectivity. At Broadcasting House, for instance, many of the studio floors and walls "float" on mattresses of resilient material in the brick tower which forms the outer shell of the structure and the ceilings also have independent suspensions in order that they shall not respond to structure-borne vibrations.

What, then, are the desirable frequency characteristics of a hall from the point of view of musical performance? It was formerly assumed that the reverberation time should be made, if possible, the same for all frequencies, but when such conditions have been attained, musicians have demanded more absorption in the treble to avoid the impression of a hardness in the string tone in the upper registers and to smother the *s* as enunciated by some singers. Some characteristics recorded by Kirke and Howe are shown in Fig. 7. The



7. Reverberation/frequency characteristic curves of B.B.C. concert studios (after Kirke and Howe).

Cardiff studio (curve CC) satisfied most nearly the demands of musical taste,

but usually, unless special features are incorporated, the curve drops more steeply through the bass, as in the Leeds studio (curve LL), making the bass relatively too prominent. If, however, due to too much wood panelling, the bass is obliterated, as in the original Manchester studio (curve MM) before treatment, the effect is unsatisfactory, like listening to an old-fashioned gramophone, and for the same reason. In any case, the architect and his consultant should aim to get the curve flat and at the correct reverberation value in the middle of the gamut first and then do what they can for the two extremes.

The number of players in an orchestra should obviously be adjusted to its size when it has the correct reverberation. The following table gives the numbers suggested by Heyl.

Volume of hall in thousands of cu. ft.	..	50	100	200	500	800
Number of instruments	10	20	30	60	90

DISTRIBUTION OF SOUND IN A CONCERT HALL

The other question we must consider is the distribution of the sound. Trouble will arise if some of the sound is focussed by traversing different paths which converge on certain spots while others get inadequate loudness in compensation. The ideal is uniform distribution, at least over the seating area. Departures from this ideal will be caused by large unbroken curved surfaces which can act as mirrors to sound. In this connection it is important to remember the difference in scale of the phenomena of sound and light. Both involve the propagation of waves, but whereas light waves are sub-microscopic, sound waves may be several feet long. Consequently an effective sound mirror needs to be several feet across. On the other hand, if we want to spoil the mirror so that it cannot produce undesirable foci, we must introduce indentations or excrescences which are themselves of foot-long size, though to spoil a light mirror it is only necessary to lay a fine deposit of powder on it. If, as did the unfortunate architect of the Albert Hall, the designer embellishes his interiors with large cupolas and domes, something like this has to be done: in fact, the most satisfactory expedient is a false low ceiling cutting off the dome. (The author knows of one such case where the reason for the false ceiling added in earlier times was forgotten; someone discovered some nice carving hidden on the original ceiling and had the false one removed to reveal a fine-looking church, but the sermon was forever after inaudible and the musical part of the service hopelessly blurred!)

There is one place in a hall, however, where advantage is to be gained by fitting a large hard and unbroken curved surface. This is behind the dais. In fact the artistes prefer to play or sing in a locality which is a little reverberant although the auditors, as we have seen, require to be in a somewhat absorbent locality. There is in fact nothing more disheartening than to perform in a perfectly absorbent enclosure, for example, a room entirely lined with cotton-wool such as is used in certain scientific research. The scheme here suggested is known as the "live end—dead end" principle and is much employed in modern concert halls for broadcasting. The artiste is thus able to gauge the effect of

his work from the local reverberations and better able to keep in pitch. In some large halls this idea is carried further. Thus, in the Pleyel Hall in Paris, the whole ceiling sweeps from a line just over the platform in a curve towards the back of the hall where it becomes horizontal. In this way sound is sent by paths parallel to the floor of the hall and absorbed on the rear walls suitably lined so that it does not penetrate back to the auditorium (Fig. 8).

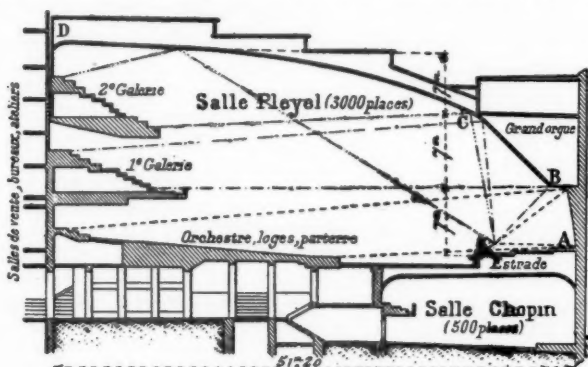


Fig. 8. Elevation of Pleyel Hall, showing sound paths.

In small studios for broadcasting, it is considered better to obtain uniform distribution of the sound energy as far as possible, to prevent the response of the microphones changing with their positions in the room. This desideratum may be met in part by fitting large convex cylinders to the walls and ceiling, the correct reverberation being assured by making their surfaces more or less absorbent. The convex surface sometimes placed above a bandstand has the same object of getting uniform sound distribution over a limited height above the ground.

Finally we must speak of amplifying systems. In the early days of their use, it was considered that any case of bad hearing could be cured by sufficient amplification of the sound, but in view of what has gone before, it should be obvious that this will merely replace indistinctness by cacophony. The correct use of loud-speakers involves first getting the reverberation time right, then raising the intensity and distributing the additional sources of sound so that each listener has adequate loudness. Each bank of seats should have a loud-speaker feeding into it in such a way that each group of the audience absorbs the sound energy supplied to it without reflection. When some tiers of seats are unoccupied, the supply to them should be cut off. Directional microphones are often used nowadays so that only sounds coming from straight in front are picked up and the "background noise" not radiated to the loud-speakers.

With the perfection of broadcasting and television, it is possible that concert-going may die out and this leads one to ponder what is verisimilitude in the reproduction of sound. The scientist would regard good reproduction as a faithful copy of what goes on among the performers; but does the listener

really want to hear all the groans of the machine; the scrape of the bow on the string, the "attack" of the wood-wind or even the panting of the conductor in his excited moments? Probably he would prefer to listen under conditions corresponding to a good seat well back in a concert hall, where these little noises pass unnoticed. If he is in his own armchair at home he will then need to be in a very absorbent alcove with the correct absorption to simulate concert-hall conditions added at the source by the broadcasting company. Then, maybe, every keen musician will build his own heated, air-conditioned, listening cabinet in his home.

Book Review

Regards sur la Musique Contemporaine. By R.-Aloys Mooser. Pp. 457. (Lausanne, F. Rouge & Cie.)

These articles, reprinted from *La Suisse* and *Dissonances*, deal with works performed in Switzerland and elsewhere between 1921 and 1946; they are introduced by a witty and acute preface by Honegger, which has something of the rapierlike quality of *Les Grotesques de la Musique*. 127 composers are examined, and it must be said at once that the four English ones (unless I have miscounted) receive shortest shrift. The name of Vaughan Williams does not appear, but neither is there any treatment of Richard Strauss. Of *Belshazzar's Feast* we learn that it attests a solid technique, but a disastrous tendency to pathos and grandiloquence, while some misguided London journalist's affiliation of *Peter Grimes* to *Wozzeck* brings down a reasoned, if caustic, analysis of Britten's musical make-up as "inconsistante dans son propos, incertaine dans sa conception, et vouée aux effets-faciles". The acidity of this critic's approach is perhaps best studied in his refusal to see any permanent element in the successive "manners" of Stravinsky, his assertion that his compatriot Bloch's violin Concerto is integrally as Jewish as the rest of his works, and his praise of a symphony by Robert Oboussier in contrast to works of musicians who never find "l'expression définitive et péremptoire". These 450 pages cannot be read "d'un seul trait"; and one unacquainted with the greater part of the works judged, rather than analysed, does not come away with very much more than an impression of a Hazlitt-like façade, without the guarded and continual antithesis that gives Hazlitt's style its perennial freshness. Yet it should be conceded ungrudgingly, by a reviewer of the type that the writer of the preface would probably destine to eternal outer darkness, that M. Mooser, the authority on Russian eighteenth-century music, cannot be dismissed as a mere "thuriféraire" of Honegger. His appreciation of Hindemith (*Mathis der Maler* in particular) and his delicate perception of the qualities that force him to acclaim Berg's opera as the most significant contribution to the music of the theatre since *Pelléas*, make that, at least, as plain as a pike-staff. For the rest, he seems, to an English mind, to be blest or cursed, as the case may be, with something of the "aridity" that he finds in Roussel's D major quartet.

E. H. W. M.

Opera and Concerts

Covent Garden

DER ROSENKAVALIER: 22nd APRIL

I FOUND this performance an exasperating experience. The principals were vocally quite equal to the task, the orchestra under Karl Rankl played well and the supporting rôles were adequately sung. Yet the whole production misfired badly and I do not know whether to blame the management for miscasting the principals or the producer for misdirecting them. For instance, that fine singer David Franklin has the voice for Ochs and sang well. However, he was never for one moment Baron Ochs. Whether this was because he is temperamentally unsuited to the part or whether the producer was at fault I cannot tell. Similarly Doris Doree, as the Princess von Werdenberg, sang excellently but failed utterly to move me. Miss Victoria Sladen was more successful in the difficult rôle of Octavian. I have never heard her sing better. Miss Virginia Mac-Watters as Sophie had an easier task and sang charmingly. There was some sensitive orchestral playing and Dr. Rankl was always firmly in control over a tricky score. None of these good things, however, could atone for the lack of insight and taste in the production. It is fashionable nowadays to engage producers from every branch of the theatre to infuse new life into operas which tend to become stale. This is an admirable idea, provided that the producer realizes that the first duty is to assist singers in interpreting the characters which they are playing. No amount of lavish spectacle, elaborate tricks or "bits of business" can cover up deficiencies of voice or characterization. In *Rosenkavalier* it is not the quality of the voices which is at fault. It is the insensitive characterization which is so depressing. The English version of the libretto by Alan Pryce-Jones appeared adequate when audible, but Mr. Robin Ironside missed his chance with the designs for the scenery. He was not helped by some unusually crude lighting. The management of the Royal Opera House have never had a greater opportunity to gain support for opera in London. Public interest has increased vastly within the last few years and the Arts Council have lent their support. It would indeed be tragic if the opportunity were lost. Public apathy could not be blamed. It would be a case of mismanagement and misdirection.

TURANDOT: 29th MAY

THIS is quite the best operatic production of the present season so far. The singing is good and the production far above previous efforts. Eva Turner as the Princess sings magnificently in a rôle which is exceptionally difficult and unsympathetic. This is a great performance worthy of the finest traditions of the house. As the Calaf, Walter Midgley on the whole acquitted himself well. It was a sound performance needing only a little more bravura and occasionally a rounder tone. Mr. Midgley is certainly the best of the tenors I have so far heard in this company. Messrs. Ping, Pang and Pong had not the voices for their task, nor were they helped by the producer, who could do little for them in their big scene except make them appear more self-conscious than ever. Oscar Natzke sang well as Timur and Vera Terry was more than adequate as Liu. Constant Lambert showed complete mastery over the score and secured a fine performance from the orchestra and magnificent work from the chorus. I like Leslie Hurry's décor, particularly in the first act. In later scenes one could have wished for some relief from the steps running straight across the back of the stage. Miss Turner appeared a little disconcerted by her gigantic train in Act II, as did its supporters. However, these were but small complaints in an evening which gave one much more hope for the future than seemed possible earlier in the season.

G. B.

Arts Theatre, Cambridge

DON GIOVANNI: 3rd JUNE

THIS performance by students from the Guildhall School of Music served two admirable purposes. It presented Mozart's masterpiece in the proper perspective and also gave the students invaluable experience in running their own show under theatre conditions. Edric Cundell was, of course, the mainstay of the whole undertaking; securing keen, animated playing from the orchestra with only an occasional mishap, and giving every possible assistance to his student singers who, one and all, could have taught many fully fledged professionals a much needed lesson in articulation. Beryl Hatt, Ian MacPherson and Islwyn David as Zerlina, Masetto and Leporello respectively, all combined a natural aptitude for the stage with real singing ability and a genuine characterization of the parts they were playing. This was something quite new to me in student opera and promises well for the future.

The stage sets and lighting were not good, which might be due in some measure to the scenery not having been designed for the Arts Theatre stage. There were also one or two curious features of the production as a whole, e.g. giving Ottavio both his "set-pieces" in the first act; and starker drama could have been made of the entry of the statue and the following pages leading to Giovanni's doom. But these are mere quibbles compared with the promise that was shown. That was the important feature.

Cambridge Theatre

RIGOLETTO: 4th JUNE

Rigoletto is Jay Pomeroy's fifth venture with the New London Opera Company. It is also quite the best. Many factors contribute to its excellence—the genius of Carl Ebert as producer, the fine voice and compelling personality of Marko Rothmuller as the jester and the precision of the orchestra under Alberto Erede—these are the most important. The other principal parts are well played by Daria Bayan (what a relief it is to see a Gilda who presents no haulage problem!) and Antonio Salvatorezza whose fine performance as the Duke would be even better with greater accuracy of intonation at the end of a phrase—there was one horrible moment in the famous quartet. For the rest Martin Lawrence as Sparafucile, Ian Wallace as Ceprano and Bruce Boyce as Monterone all enhance their rising reputations and vindicate the policy of mixed casting, without doubt the surest way in which our native singers of promise can bring that promise to fulfilment.

Nothing has been spared to make this *Rigoletto* as good as possible. It is a great achievement and ought to be recorded.

G. N. S.

Covent Garden

IL TROVATORE, 23rd JUNE

ALTHOUGH this ghoulish favourite of our great-grandmothers (the librettist, like the illustrator of *The Ghost Stories of an Antiquary*, died just before his job was done) was Verdi's eighteenth opera and saw the light in his fortieth year, there is only one way in which to produce it, as hardest-boiled melodrama, yet somehow suggesting a world opera-champion to be, a peerless hobbledohoy, leaving a trail of bloody noses behind him on the village green. You must get something of *Oliver Twist* plus *The Tower of London* into it; it must be Shakespeare (not Gilbert) or nothing, and Professor Dent's elegant translation is unnecessary, since in any tongue the words evaporate through the *bel canto*. Such a performance is possibly not infrequently to be witnessed in one of those little Italian hill towns, of which a few still remain, where the principals in *Where Angels fear to tread* witnessed *Lucia di Lammermoor*; but I have not witnessed one, and I am beginning to think that I never shall, at Covent Garden anyhow. Still, Edith Coates seemed to see the opera from that angle, and her Azucena, an imposingly terrific Meg Merrilies of the

South, was sustained on one level throughout, while delicate vocal pathos was allowed, somehow not incongruously, to appear just before the close. Doris Doree was happier in her part as the horrors progressed; in the earlier scenes, supported by Arthur Carron and Jess Walters she seemed to be doing her bit in an unseemly, but tepid, Victorian domestic brawl. The Troubadour and the Count, indeed, left me with a suspicion that they would have been more at home in *The Yeomen of the Guard*, and Manrico's voice wobbled in the "Miserere". Ferrando (Marian Nowakowski) and the Chorus were energetic, but the décor, with a notable exception, had a Tussaudish misery and splendour. That exception was the gipsy camp, in which the grouping of figures above and in the ravine, their not overdone dancing and their slipping out through the defile under the barren withered tree produced something of a fantasy in Callot's manner; Mr. Derek Hill is to be congratulated on that, though in Act IV flames should not rise *before* a witch burning—too imaginative by half. I cannot say that Mr. Goodall's conducting warmed me up at any point, nor, even with the applause bestowed on the march in Act III (a worse piece of vulgarity than the "Orgy" in *Les Huguenots*) still ringing in my ears, can I believe that barnstorming operas can be made really effective in present-day England.

E. H. W. M.

Glyndebourne

ORFEO: 24th JUNE

To hold the attention of a modern audience a good deal has to be done with Gluck's *Orfeo* in the matter of "presentation". The drama has the same static quality that presents such a problem in staging Greek tragedy for a modern audience (especially if that audience knows no Greek). There is, however, a solid foundation of first-class music in Gluck's score with its fascinating amalgam of rhythmic variation and unexpected discord—a promising basis for a Glyndebourne production, and on the whole we were not disappointed. Most notable were the crisp, highly-pointed playing of the Southern Philharmonic Orchestra under Fritz Stiedry and the variety of stage spectacle contrived by Carl Ebert. Kathleen Ferrier seemed nervous at first, but later sang with sustained power and fine quality of tone to score a personal triumph as Orfeo, while Ann Ayars as Euridice and Zoë Vlachopoulos as Amor each dealt successfully with their rather unrewarding rôles. The intonation of the chorus was magnificently accurate throughout the evening.

It was a great pity that the ballet which plays so large a part was so feeble, dull and lacking in fire when Kurt Jooss, for example, could and would have made it contribute decisively to the dramatic power of the whole.

Joseph Carl's scenery was cleverly designed and beautifully painted, but we could have wished it had been more substantially constructed.

[The Decca Co. have made an abridged recording of this production, a gesture which we hope will meet with the reception it deserves.]

Orchestral Concerts

ON 16th May, at the Albert Hall, Schnabel gave what must have been one of his finest performances of the Brahms B flat Concerto with the Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by Issay Dobrowen. It had all the coherence and depth for which one always hopes, and in the finale Schnabel was far more accurate than we remember from pre-war days. The Mozart C minor Concerto which preceded the Brahms was also admirable, apart from two almost incredible cadenzas which we believe were Schnabel's own.

Sir Thomas Beecham's Mozart concerts at Drury Lane proved that the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra is a precise and accurate instrument, but that it also lacks the flexibility which used to be the most characteristic feature of the London Philharmonic in Mozart under Beecham before the war. This was particularly evident in the *Paris* Symphony and the Divertimento (K.131) on 11th May.

The concert on 1st June was potentially the most interesting of the three and did in fact fulfil its promise, though not in the way we had expected. Trevor Anthony stole all the thunder with a rousing performance of the delightfully mischievous *Kriegslied* (K.539), "Ich möchte wohl der Kaiser sein". Though it would be difficult to concoct a learned thesis proving this to be a world masterpiece, it had great virtue as comic relief after very disappointing performances of the C minor Mass and "Ruhe Sanft" from *Zaide* (K.344). Mr. Anthony also did well in his small part in the Mass in contrast to the other three soloists who were collectively and individually disappointing, while the Choir were nameless in the programme and shall remain so in these notes. G. N. S.

Gramophone Records

*Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E flat, Op. 55.**

London Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Victor de Sabata.

Decca K 1507-13. 33s. 3d.

*Verdi: I Vespri Siciliani, Sinfonia.**

Augusteo Symphony Orchestra, Rome, c. Victor de Sabata.

His Master's Voice DB 6444. 6s.

We take these two issues together because between them they delineate all the main characteristics of Sabata's conducting. In the Verdi there is a fluency, spontaneity and emotional power ideally suited to the alternately brooding and tempestuous nature of the music. The technical brilliance of the playing too is sheer delight. The Beethoven has its curious moments, being at times wayward and fragmentary and thus so much the less heroic; but in compensation, wherever Beethoven's texture proves too complex for the majority of our interpreters to integrate—these are just the points at which Sabata seizes the music quite unmistakably, shakes out all the creases and presents us with the full sequence of the argument which then seems more convincing than ever before. The London Philharmonic Orchestra play well and the recording of both works is very fine. We hope the Decca Co. will correct the unfortunate mistake repeated on all 14 sides of our review set and also suggest that for the Verdi the term "overture" would conform to more general practice.

[In case any of our readers should be misled, the price of Decca K series records is now 4s. 9d. each, plus 1s. 0½d. purchase tax.]

*Beethoven: Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93.**

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Herbert von Karajan.

Columbia LX 988-99. 18s.

This is a first-rate performance modelled, consciously or not, on Mengelberg's, whose pre-war Telefunken version still holds its own. The recording is not very wide in frequency range and suffers from a heavy echo effect; for which reason the Telefunken remains our first choice, but there are no challengers for second.

*Handel: Organ Concertos, No. 2 in B flat and No. 4 in F.**

G. D. Cunningham and City of Birmingham Orchestra, c. Weldon.

Columbia DX 1358-60. 12s.

These two recordings (three sides each) throw fresh and very revealing light on music which we thought we knew well enough from Promenade concerts. Hamfisted ruthlessness is not the proper treatment for these works which are here shown to have individual and quite unsuspected merits. Dr. Cunningham's artistry is most persuasive, the Birmingham Orchestra plays better than we have heard since the days of Leslie Heward and the recording engineers have obtained an excellent result with a very difficult medium.

* Strongly recommended.

Mozart: Horn Concerto No. 2 in E flat (K.417).

Dennis Brain and the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Süsskind.

Columbia DX 1365-66. 8s.

Now that K.447 and 495 have been recorded there remain only K.412 and the fragmentary 371 (of which the *Rondo* at least is worth attention) to complete the series.

Dennis Brain's playing is magnificent. That of the orchestra gives the impression of efficiency in a rough fashion, but this may be due to overamplification. The quality of the recording is fair.

*Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 2 in B flat, Op. 19.**

Schnabel and the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Dobrowen.

His Master's Voice DB 6323-26. 24s.

The recording is better than that of the old set, but not as much so as it should be. A wider range of frequencies is needed to deal adequately with the wealth of detail in this fascinating score. Schnabel's performance is very much as before, while that of the orchestra is finer, principally owing to Dobrowen's appreciation of the scale of the music and of the degree of emphasis with which to deploy it in order to secure the right and proper effect.

The work has been treated with that combination of reverence and gusto which never fails to reach the core of any music of distinction. Therefore we recommend the records, but with the reservation that they should have been better from the engineers' standpoint.

Strauss: Suite, Der Rosenkavalier, and**Wagner: Lohengrin, Prelude, Act III.*

The Hallé Orchestra, c. Barbirolli.

His Master's Voice C 3556-58. 12s.

If the Hallé Orchestra under Barbirolli's direction are to continue to record performances of the quality of this *Rosenkavalier* Suite we suggest that, as a matter of prestige, they should be transferred from the plum to the red label. We are not anxious that music-lovers generally should have to pay more for their records, and could easily suggest other artists who should transfer from red to plum or cease to record at all; but there is a large section of the public which believes that the most expensive must always be the best, and conversely that the cheaper records must have something wrong with them. On this showing the Hallé Orchestra deserve to be rescued from the possibility of any such suspicion. The recording, though, could be improved—it will not compare with that of *The Planets* or *Petrouchka*.

Sibelius: Symphonic Poem, Tapiola, Op. 112.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Beecham.

His Master's Voice DB 6412-13. 12s.

As records, these are better than Kajanus', but the performance may not have been as good. The main difference lies in the clarity of the recording, as there is something like fifteen years between them. Beecham's performance progresses from a rather scrappy opening to a really pungent close and, in the end, creates its effect. The brass climaxes are well recorded and can be reproduced at good volume without any blasting; but unfortunately the quality of the records deteriorates very noticeably towards the disc centres and where at all heavily recorded the last half-inch is rough and unpleasant. Readers are recommended to compare both sets with that made by Koussevitzky before making a decision.

*Franck: Chorale No. 3 in A minor.**

Fernando Germani.

His Master's Voice C 3580-81. 8s.

Every connoisseur of organ-playing should make a point of hearing these records. Germani's performance is superb with recording to match. Very highly recommended.

* Strongly recommended.

*Rimsky-Korsakov: Russian Easter Festival Overture.**

National Symphony Orchestra, c. Jorda.

Decca K 1522-23. 9s. 6d.

This is not one of Rimsky-Korsakov's most electrifying pieces, but the first-rate performance and recording make this a very satisfying issue. As a conductor we believe Enrique Jorda is in the same class as Leinsdorf, Galliera and von Karajan, all of whom in time can be relied upon to bring about an improvement on present standards of orchestral playing.

Wagner: Die Walküre, Act III.

Helen Traubel, Herbert Janssen, the Metropolitan Opera Company and New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, c. Rodzinski.

Columbia LX 955-62. 48s.

These records fill a gap and the performance is respectable, but the recording is not good and readers are not recommended to buy them without a preliminary hearing.

*Auber: Overture, Masaniello.**

London Symphony Orchestra, c. Victor Olof.

Decca K 1314. 4s. 9d.

Thomas: Overture, Raymond.

National Symphony Orchestra, c. Boyd Neel.

Decca K 1299. 4s. 9d.

Weber: Overture, Euryanthe.

Hallé Orchestra, c. Barbirolli.

His Master's Voice C 3560. 4s.

*Overture, Der Freischütz.**

London Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Leinsdorf.

Decca K 1589. 4s. 9d.

All these are well done, with the *Freischütz* record outstanding in every department. Erich Leinsdorf created a great impression when he came to this country a year ago and as a souvenir he has left us one of the finest orchestral records yet released. Victor Olof's *Masaniello* is well above the usual standard of the London Symphony Orchestra, Barbirolli turns out a good *Euryanthe* and Boyd Neel does everything possible with Thomas' flabby piece. Technically the Decca records are to be preferred with K 1589 the best of the three.

Chopin: Sonata in B minor, Op. 58.

Dinu Lipatti.

Columbia LX 994-96. 18s.

Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 2.

Alexander Brailowsky.

His Master's Voice DB 6414. 6s.

Two excellent performances which we group together to emphasise the contrast in recording. The Chopin is well done without being exceptional, while the Liszt has been given the worst possible send-off by the engineers—the record is coarse, shallow, deficient in bass and treble and in fact a model of everything it ought not to be. We hope it will be withdrawn, and speedily. Anyone wanting a record of the Chopin Sonata is advised to hear Brailowsky's (His Master's Voice) set before making a decision.

* Strongly recommended.

J. S. Bach, arr. Fournier: Chorale, "O Man bemoan they grievous sins",*
 "The old year has passed away" and
 "When we are in deepest need".

Pierre Fournier and Gerald Moore.

His Master's Voice DB 6372. 6s.

It is impossible to recommend this record too highly. Setting aside any argument about the desirability of making such transcriptions and simply accepting Fournier's versions of the music for what they are worth, we have to acclaim a superb performance by both artists, recorded to the high standard it deserves.

Mozart: Quartet in D minor (K.421).

Hungarian String Quartet.

His Master's Voice DB 6445-47. 18s.

Schubert: Quartet in A minor, Op. 29.

Philharmonia String Quartet.

Columbia DX 1349-52. 16s.

The Hungarian String Quartet, perhaps the finest now before the public, give an excellent performance with the finale exceptionally accurate and vital. The Philharmonia do not play with comparable finesse but are rather better recorded. Both sets should be heard.

Fauré: Pavane, Op. 50.

Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus, c. Sargent.

Columbia DX 1369. 4s.

Although adequately played, sung and recorded, the music as here portrayed lacks that delicacy and precision so essential to a full realization of the composer's intentions. This is good enough to arouse interest but not to enthrall.

Verdi: Ballo in Maschera, "Eri tu. . ."

Otello, "Credo".

Paolo Silveri and Covent Garden Opera Orchestra, c. Patane.

Columbia DX 1367. 4s.

Weber: Oberon, "Ozean, du Ungeheuer".

Flagstad and Philadelphia Orchestra, c. Ormandy.

His Master's Voice DB 3440. 6s.

Both these are disappointing. Silveri's voice is too light for the famous "Credo" and he fails to bring out the full magnificence of "Eri tu. . .". The recording is good. The Weber is a re-issue. Fine voice, fine performance, very bad recording.

Duparc: *Élégie on the Death of Robert Emmet*.*

L'Invitation au Voyage.

Pierre Bernac and Francis Poulenc.

His Master's Voice DB 6312. 6s.

Excellent performance and good recording.

G. N. S.

Schumann: Concerto in A minor, Op. 54.

Claudio Arrau and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, c. Karl Krueger.

His Master's Voice DB 6373-6376. 24s.

An uneven performance in which the soloist never completely captures the spirit of the work. He is obviously technically a fine performer but in the first movement the

* Strongly recommended.

tone is often too hard and there is not enough variation. In the second movement there are some beautiful moments and the *allegro vivace* is well played. The recording is as uneven as the performance and there is some bad distortion in the first movement. In the accompaniment, directed with great sympathy by Karl Krueger, there is some fine playing from the strings but the principal clarinet has missed his chance. I have yet to hear a performance to equal M. Cortot's.

Massenet: Manon, "Ah! dispar vision".

Werther, "Ah! non mi ridestar".

Beniamino Gigli and the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, c. Rainaldo Zamboni.

His Master's Voice DB 6346. 6s.

Gigli scrapes the last drop of treacle out of the Massenet tin. It is beautifully done and his tone, as usual, is magnificent. Recording and accompaniment are good.

Wagner: Lohengrin, Act 3, Scene 2 (Bridal Chamber Scene).

Helen Traubel and Kurt Baum with the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York, c. Artur Rodzinski.

Columbia LX 991-992. 12s.

Once again Miss Traubel proves herself a sound Wagnerian and is ably assisted by Kurt Baum. Once again the recording has all the worst faults of American issues—coarseness, distortion and bad balance. Very little blame can be attached to the conductor for this. Mr. Rodzinski obviously knows his job from A to Z. The recording seems quite incapable of taking a climax and the accompaniment is muzzy with distortion. Nevertheless the records are still worth hearing for some truly fine singing, and I hope that one day the engineers will share my view of Miss Traubel's voice and give her a worthy accompaniment.

Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana, "Voi lo sapete, o mamma".

Catalini: La Wally, "Ebben? ne andra lontana".

Maria Caniglia and the Orchestra of the Opera House, Rome, c. Luigi Ricci.

His Master's Voice DB 6351. 6s.

The Catalini aria is one of the best things Caniglia has given us. *La Wally*, almost unknown over here, is still popular in Italy and is Catalini's finest work. This aria is grand stuff, beautifully sung. The *Cavalleria Rusticana* has some fine moments but has the same fault which mars so many of Caniglia's records—a tendency to shrillness on top notes. The accompaniment and recording are good.

Delibes: Lakmé, Bell Song.

Gwen Catley with orchestra conducted by Stanford Robinson.

His Master's Voice B 9541. 3s. 3d.

Miss Catley can do better than this, and, if we "must" have another recording of the Bell Song, she should take more trouble over it. She does not help herself by using a translation which makes the whole thing sound rather more ridiculous than it really is, and horribly like an excerpt from a third-rate seaside concert. The recording and accompaniment are adequate.

Handel: Samson, "Total Eclipse".

Haydn: The Creation, "In Native Worth".

Webster Booth with orchestra, c. Stanford Robinson.

His Master's Voice C 3571. 4s.

This versatile singer can more than hold his own in opera and oratorio. I enjoyed the care and feeling he has given to these records. The accompaniment and recording are good.

Rossini: William Tell, Passo a sei and Little March of the Shepherds.

Symphony Orchestra of the Augusteo, Rome, c. Tullio Serafin.

His Master's Voice C 3559. 4s.

A good performance as far as can be judged from a recording which is the worst I have heard for some years. I have tried this record on two different reproducers and with fibre and steel needles, but cannot get any satisfaction.

Brahms: In Silent Night.

Arr. Robertson: Kedron.

Glasgow Orpheus Choir, c. Sir Hugh Robertson.

His Master's Voice B 9549. 3s. 3d.

I wish this fine choir would give us something a little more exciting. The tone and phrasing are good and the recording adequate but I still hope that His Master's Voice will one day let us hear them in one of the great choral works. G. B.

*Berlioz: Overture, Le Corsair, Op. 21.**

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Beecham.

His Master's Voice DB 6357. 6s.

Now that Beecham's own orchestra is coming on to the discs we have the opportunity of studying its and his work at leisure. This record shows that this distinguished conductor can still pull them out of the hat, for the performance is first-rate if not, perhaps, always pure Berlioz. The precision of the brass is exceptional, and the whole attack is superb. The recording does not seem to have all the top that we have noticed on some recent His Master's Voice discs, but is well balanced and clean.

*Suk: Four pieces for violin and piano, Op. 17.**

Ginette and Jean Neveu.

His Master's Voice DB 6359-60. 12s.

Two extremely fine records. The compositions themselves are, perhaps, somewhat slight, but the Neveus handle their respective instruments with an easy confidence that makes the whole thoroughly enjoyable. The recording is good and studio acoustics much better than usual with this type of record. Again, there is some loss of top as compared with some records of this marque, but it is slight, and the two discs are good examples of "demonstration" records to show off a good instrument. It is often considered that a piano is a good test for transient response, and a violin for width and smoothness of response. Well, here are the two allegedly supreme tests together.

Beethoven: Piano sonata in E flat, Op. 81a.

Albert Ferber.

Decca K 1569-70. 9s. 6d.

The performance and recording are competent, and the discs would be well worth adding to one's Beethoven collection were it not that the acoustics of the studio, or something allied to this, produce a certain tubbiness in quality which makes the set rather disappointing. There is no lack of top response in the records, but as compared with the Suk records, the general effect is flat and uninspiring. The Decca Co. has produced some magnificent orchestral records in which the concert-hall atmosphere has been "put over" in a remarkable manner, and depth of reproduction in the most complicated scores has not been lost. It ought to be easier to cope with one piano, or is it that the same care is not always taken with less ambitious recordings? This criticism can be levelled at all makes. H. A. H.

* Strongly recommended.

Britten: Young People's Guide to the Orchestra.

Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Sargent.

Columbia DX 1307-8, DXS 1309. 10s.

String Quartet No. 2 in C, Op. 36.

Zorian Quartet, and

Purcell: Fantasia Upon One Note.

Zorian Quartet and Benjamin Britten.

His Master's Voice C 3536-9. 16s.

The Purcell movement, which is for five string instruments, serves to fill the odd side of the quartet issue and to show off Mr. Britten's talents as ensemble violist. It provides a nicely played museum piece, and inclusion here was no doubt a consequence of the Quartet having been written for the 250th Anniversary of Purcell's death.

Britten's second Quartet is his best work to date, choral compositions apart. Its virility will, no doubt, embarrass many of the Britten hangers-on whose uncritical reactions reached sickening point long enough ago. The composer is no longer anybody's nice boy; with this work he has grown up.

There are three movements. On paper the first reads like a polytonal exercise in classical form; on the records it comes out as a most satisfying movement, in which the composer's tenth-progressions are organized to achieve great tonal beauty and in which the integration of subject matter is most deftly handled. The brief scherzo and trio provide an essentially rhythmic essay in which the ear is relieved from the intense concentration on tonality engendered by the first movement and re-imposed by the third. This last is a theme with twenty-one variations, labelled "Chacony". The chaconne element is embodied in the theme itself, though in one group of variations it is in fact used as an ostinato accompaniment to new matter. Nine bars long, the theme modulates within that distance from B \flat to the home-key, C, revealing immediately a background of polytonality against which the variations are ingeniously grouped. Each group joins the next *via* a cadenza and each instrument has this to play in turn. The movement takes up four of the seven sides. That it is not too long and that the work is not consequently unbalanced derives from the intensity of interest, tonal, structural and emotional that it is able to convey.

The recording is reasonable and the playing excellent.

The *Young Persons' Guide* is a greatly diverting work. Sub-titled "Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Purcell," it is precisely what the label says it is, each variation being dominated by, or given entirely to, one or other section of the orchestra. The fugue is brilliantly clever and the whole work almost deserves to stand as a composition in its own right. One hopes that the composer's present preoccupation with full orchestra might lead him to use it sometime in an essay in absolute music.

Prokofiev: Alexander Nevski, Cantata, Op. 78.

The Philadelphia Orchestra, c. Ormandy, the Westminster Choir and Jennie Tourel.

Columbia LX 977-81. 30s.

This work is an elaboration of the music Prokofiev provided for the film *Alexander Nevski*. It emerges as an orchestro-choral suite in which seven short, well constructed movements hang together in an unexpectedly satisfying way. The Battle movement, the longest item, has tremendous verve. Between this and the triumphal finale is a mezzo-soprano song of mourning which accounts for Miss Tourel's name on the label. She has a beautiful voice. Because of the aural might of the battle scene the finale comes as an anticlimax, the scoring of which is undoubtedly faulty. An over-huge weight of human voices, be their noise never so large, cannot achieve the sonorous nobility of well-scored orchestration and the peroration could better have been musical rather than mob-acclamatory. The recording is not of the best, the principal fault being surface hiss, American variety.

Schumann: *Frauenliebe und Leben*,* Op. 42, and *Der Himmel hat eine Thräne geweint*, and *O! Ihr Herren*, Op. 37, Nos. 1 and 3.

Astra Desmond, acc. Phyllis Spurr.

Decca K 1566-8. 14s. 3d.

In Miss Desmond's picture of this wonderful work the colours are perhaps a little too light; but they are clean and distinct with no touch of the smudging varnish so often overlaid on these love-songs. Her vocal lines are held firmly and accurately and the overall effect is one of studied excellence. Miss Spurr's accompaniment matches the singing; she plays the all-important closing passage, which recalls the young widow's early happiness, very beautifully. Schumann left this ending to the piano with a clear purpose and here it is well realized.

The songs from Op. 37 which fill the odd side are a good choice and are equally well performed.

Beethoven: *Sonata in F minor ("Appassionata")*, Op. 57.

Medtner.

His Master's Voice C 3551-3. 12s.

Elsewhere, this recording has been heavily criticized. One perceives what the pianist is trying to do and welcomes it in the face of too many modern efforts to reproduce the *Appassionata* as an exercise in sonata form. But he does not in fact come near to achieving his end, and it has to be said that this performance is an overworked effort, withal in the right direction. The recording is indifferent.

Scarlatti: *Sonata in A (Longo 45) and in B flat (Longo 46)*.

Kathleen Long.

Decca M 581. 3s. 3d.

This is the second pair of sonatas Miss Long has recorded in this series and we hope she will continue. We might hope also that Decca will discover what has gone wrong with their recording of her piano.

Tartini: *Sonata in G minor*.*

Campoli, acc. Eric Gritton.

Decca K 1531-2. 9s. 6d.

Beautifully performed, and adequately recorded, this set is strongly recommended. Apart from "The Devil's Trill," which Kreisler's arrangement killed for good, we rarely hear Tartini in recitals, and only one other of his sonatas is on records. To those who know eighteenth-century fiddle music and do not know Tartini, this sonata will come as a revelation. It has a depth and warmth that is rarely found amongst his contemporaries. On the odd side is *Arioso: Adagio*, by Bach, which appears to be an arrangement of matter from a cantata. It is well played and provides pleasant listening.

Dvořák: *Symphony No. 3 in F*, Op. 76 and

Glinka: *Russian and Ludmilla*, Overture.

City of Birmingham Orchestra, c. Weldon.

Columbia DX 1315-9. 20s.

The fifth of Dvořák's essays in symphony and the third to be published, this work receives here its first recorded performance. His first two symphonies exist still in manuscript only and are said to have escaped the composer's celebrated purge of his music only by accident. The second two are known to be weak, even for early Dvořák. This may properly be regarded as his first great work for orchestra; it caused Hans von Bülow to apostrophize the composer as, next to Brahms, the most God-gifted of his day. This recording provided the reviewer's first remembered hearing of the work. It is

* Strongly recommended.

charming stuff, with the characteristic aura of near-greatness which so often tantalizes in Dvořák's music. The set is worth having; Mr. Weldon secures a crisp, tidy performance, and is recorded well in patches. For some reason the quality of reproduction falls off in the Scherzo after a good start and finds itself again for the Finale.

Russian and Ludmilla is a very good make-weight and takes full marks in every department.

Grieg: I Love Thee, and

Rachmaninoff: Floods of Spring, Op. 14, No. 11.

Marjorie Lawrence, acc. Ivor Newton.

Decca M 602. 3s. 3d.

To most people it cannot matter very much who chews over these two comfits again. Miss Lawrence does it with no noticeable enthusiasm.

Debussy: Claire de Lune, and

Golliwog's Cakewalk.

Heifetz, acc. Emanuel Bay. Brunswick 03691. 3s. 3d.

Fiddling of astonishing virtuosity in execrable taste recorded with unusual purity and clarity.

Delius: Piano Concerto.

Moiseiwitsch and the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Lambert.

His Master's Voice C 3533-4. CS 3535. 10s.

The interest here is surely less in the manner of its doing than in the fact that it has, at last, been done. Yet, to lovers of Delius this issue will be a disappointment. The principal fault is in the recording; in places it achieves a stridency which wreaks ruin on the subtly mounting climaxes and blurs more than one solo passage. Perhaps Moiseiwitsch is playing too massively, though on the whole his performance is good, and we have had excellent recordings of much heavier scores than this from the Gramophone Co. in recent months. In part, it is the old story of unbalanced amplification of piano and orchestra, a fault which has bedevilled more than one recent piano concerto issue. The recording is by no means the worst we have heard; and the orchestral playing is good. To buy or not to buy depends entirely on the extent to which the gramophile has hungered after possession of this lovely work.

Pergolesi: Stabat Mater.

The Nottingham Oriana Choir, Joan Taylor, Kathleen Ferrier and the Boyd Neel String Orchestra, c. Roy Henderson.

Decca AK 1517-21. 23s. 9d.

Between des Prés and Stanford more than a dozen settings of *Stabat Mater* have been made and these include versions by Haydn, Rossini, Verdi and Dvořák. There is thus no denying its implied suitability as a vehicle for big scale choral composition. Yet it has inspired none to his best endeavours (though Rossini's effort has some of his finest moments) except Pergolesi. *Stabat Mater* is commonly held to be his most important work. That may well be so, and it stamps him as an important, but quite minor, composer. Important, because his work serves perfectly to show what might have been the antecedents of eighteenth and nineteenth century choral composition had Handel and J. S. Bach not lived; minor, because they did live, in fact in his own day, and whilst he was pushing the contemporary idiom to its furthest boundaries, his great contemporaries were advancing music beyond his ken. He clothes his own, dated, operatic idiom with a comfortable, worn beauty such that, however posterity has served the operas, this work deserves to live; but his style cannot sustain its length and avoid entirely the arid moment and the padded-out episode.

The choir is ordinary, the soloists are good and the orchestra superb. The recording is good.

Strauss: Don Juan, Op. 20.

The Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Galliera.

Columbia DX 1356-7. 8s.

The Mengelberg-Concertgebouw recording, which set a performance standard for this work, is not now available to the buyer or to this reviewer. The Karl Böhm-Dresden records (His Master's Voice DB 4625-6) can still be bought, and it must be said that the Dresden playing is superior in certain vital respects to that of the present performance. If this were all, one could be unequivocal; but it so happens that the Columbia issue is remarkably well recorded by comparison with the older set. On balance it can be recommended, the performance being above average in a work which is rarely done well by British orchestras.

Reflecting on why this should be so, one cannot help comparing the reaction of our orchestras to this score with the effect upon a collection of upper-class Britishers of a good dirty story. Anyone who has really absorbed this work knows, for example, precisely what the big theme means—and incidentally why Strauss gives it, first, to the horns. It so often gets played with an embarrassed tentativeness, a kind of soundless shuffling of the feet. In this performance one welcomes an effort really to make that point and many others, with an honest frankness matching their conception. Mr. Galliera knows what Strauss was about in Opus 20; perhaps he also knows, really knows, what Don Juan was about.

Janáček: Sinfonietta.

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Rafael Kubelik.

His Master's Voice C 3573-5. 12s.

Firstly it may be said that the reorganized Czech Philharmonic is an orchestra of potential magnificence, and this recording does them fair. Not everything they do is faultless, but the essentials are there. As for the young Mr. Kubelik, we shall have to hear him in more testing music before we shall know. The five short rhapsodies which constitute the *Sinfonietta* have an earthy charm and occasional vitality. The suggestion (*vide* His Master's Voice publicity) that Smetana, Dvořák and Janáček provide the basis of Czech national composition is unfair to two great Nationalists who were also great composers.

*Khachaturian: Gayaneh; Dance of the Young Maidens, Sabre Dance and Lullaby.**

Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Malko.

His Master's Voice C 3572. 4s.

This is important music for one reason, and for one reason only. Movements of a ballet, these pieces are truly choreographic in style and are vitally alive, as the dancing body must be alive. All those native composers who have wasted time and substance—often good substance too—in writing to weary legends for Sadler's Wells should listen to this music, learn the lesson and turn all their attention to writing the music that is in their hearts—as this music is in this Armenian's bones.

The Philharmonia play very well indeed, Malko securing an effect of extreme rhythmic tension and the recording is outstanding.

Brahms: So Willst du des Armen, Op. 33, No. 5,

Der Schmied, Op. 19, No. 4, and

Nicht mehr zu Dir zu gehen, Op. 32, No. 2.

Marjorie Lawrence, acc. Ivor Newton.

Decca M 598. 3s. 3d.

Here is a good record which misses distinction through no fault in the singer. The accompaniment does not reproduce well and the pianist himself may not be without blame for some lack of balance between his instrument and the voice.

* Strongly recommended.

Weber: *Der Freischütz, Max's Aria.*

Tauber, with orchestral accompaniment.

Parlophone RO 20551. 4s.

Borodin: *Prince Igor, No Rest, No Peace.**

John Hargreaves and the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Braithwaite.

His Master's Voice C 3561. 4s.

Wagner: *Tannhäuser, Elizabeth's Greeting, and Lohengrin, Elsa's Dream.*

Joan Hammond and the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Braithwaite.

His Master's Voice C 3562. 4s.

"Durch die Wälder" gives us Tauber's best recorded operatic performance for some years and the record is well worth buying. Stronger recommendation must, however, be reserved for Hargreaves' performance of Prince Igor's aria. Here at last is a vocal-orchestral recording entirely free from any kind of extraneous noise, including surface hiss when played with enough "top" to do it justice and with perfect tonal balance; all this apart from a most musicianly presentation. The Wagner record is acceptable, but there is some top-note blasting towards the end of the *Lohengrin* aria.

Beethoven: *Sonata in C minor, Op. 13, and*

Bagatelle in E flat, Op. 33, No. 1.

Eileen Joyce.

Decca AK 1553-5. 14s. 3d.

This is very nice piano playing, but it is not Beethoven. There are many fine women pianists, of whom Miss Joyce is one; they will never be able to play Beethoven, any of them. The same goes for Brahms.

Falla: *The Miller's Dance, and*

Ibert: *Le Petit Ane Blanc.*

Ida Haendel, acc. Adela Kotowska.

Decca M 603. 3s. 3d.

These finely recorded arrangements are designed to show off technical tricks. They succeed; the violin, for example, produces a much more assinine "He-Haw" than Ibert's original piano can. This is no reward for a performance in which the piano accompaniment is the better part by far. The *Miller's Dance* arrangement is also rubbishy.

Mendelssohn: *Ruy Blas, Overture, Op. 95.*

National Symphony Orchestra, c. Heinz Unger.

Decca K 1326. 4s. 9d.

A comparison will show that this performance is in no way better than that of the Birmingham Orchestra on the recent Columbia DX 1223; perhaps the recording is superior by a little, but before buying both should be heard.

Ravel: *Introduction and Allegro for Harp, Flute, Clarinet and String Quartet.*

John Cockerill, Jean Pougnet, David Martin, Frederick Riddle, James Whitehead,

Arthur Cleghorn and Reginald Kell, and

Debussy: *Première Arabesque.*

John Cockerill.

Columbia DX 1310-1. 8s.

The Ravel septet is well played and pleasantly recorded except for what are probably unavoidable percussive noises from the harp strings (one gets the same thing in harpsichord recording). The issue is worth possessing and one is not obliged to listen to the celebrated Debussy piano piece, the harp solo on the odd side; it is quite nasty. All the players are good individually and they manage a difficult score like a seasoned team. J. B.

* Strongly recommended

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